

# STARS AND STRIPES®

**After slow start,  
Houston Rockets  
into playoff picture**

Back page

Tracy McGrady (11), Yao Ming and Jon Barry (20)



**Warning: Smoking  
may be hazardous  
to your job**

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**War robot to  
join fight  
in Iraq**

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SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 2005

## Iraq's moment of truth

- U.S. troops to play support role in Sunday's historic election Page 4
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AP photos

Above: An unidentified Iraqi woman casts an absentee ballot Friday at a polling station in Istanbul, Turkey. Iraqis will go to the polls in their homeland Sunday, voting for an interim 275-member national assembly that will write a new constitution for the country.

Right: Iraqi voter Ather Mudhafer of Foster, Va., gives the peace sign after casting his absentee ballot Friday in New Carrollton, Md.

**Stars and Stripes will not print a Jan. 30 edition in Iraq due to election-day travel restrictions. Delivery will resume Jan. 31. We apologize for any inconvenience to our readers.**

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## News Tracker ... What's new with old news

### Business

**Sears-Kmart deal:** The waiting period required under antitrust law has expired for discount retailer Kmart Holding Corp.'s planned \$11 billion acquisition of the Sears, Roebuck and Co. department store chain, the companies said Friday.

The waiting period under the Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act expired at the end of the day Thursday, the companies said. It is required to allow the Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice time to examine any anti-competitive implications of mergers and acquisitions.

The deal, which is expected to close in early March and create the nation's third-largest retailer, is subject to approval by Kmart and Sears shareholders as well as other regulatory approvals.

**Riggs Bank scandal:** Riggs Bank has pleaded guilty to failing to report suspicious transactions in the accounts of foreigners, including former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, and agreed to pay a \$16 million fine.

In its aggressive courtship of foreign political figures to win their banking business, the old-line Washington, D.C., bank failed to exercise oversight and aided their illegitimate use of the bank, federal prosecutors said Thursday.

It would be the largest criminal penalty ever imposed on a bank of Riggs' size, according to prosecutors, and comes after a record \$25 million fine levied on the bank by a Treasury Department agency last May.

The plea agreement still needs the approval of U.S. District Judge Ricardo Urbina, who expressed some skepticism about the penalty's adequacy at a hearing Thursday.

**HealthSouth fraud case:** An accountant who pored over HealthSouth's books for the government in its case against fired CEO Richard Scrushy testified that earnings were inflated by \$2.7 billion from 1996 through 2002.

The false financial statements were not the result of aggressive accounting practices, as the defense might suggest, said forensic accountant Harvey Kelly.

"It was just flat-out making up numbers," he said.

Kelly's testimony Thursday came after Scrushy's defense tried to damage the credibility of a key witness in the government's criminal case, HealthSouth co-founder Aaron Beam.

Scrushy is accused of conspiring with HealthSouth executives to overstate earnings in order to meet analyst expectations, boosting company shares and enriching himself by millions.

### States

**Forgotten-diver suit:** A diver who drifted for five hours after a boat crew left him at sea has sued the diving company for \$4 million.

Daniel Carlock Jr. filed a lawsuit Thursday in Los Angeles Superior Court against Ocean Adventures Dive Co. and its employees, accusing them of negligence, inflicting emotional distress and fraud.

Carlock, 46, alleges Ocean Adventures left him off Santa Catalina Island on April 25, 2004, then lied about his location, delaying his rescue for five hours. He was eventually rescued by Boy Scouts in the area.

### World

**Deadly-doctor investigation:** A judge on Thursday identified up to 15 new victims of Britain's worst serial killer Harold Shipman, bringing the total number of people killed by the family doctor to about 250. The government said it will review patient safety.



**Wash. chemical fire:** Martha Landa holds her six-month-old son, Alexander, near their cots at a Red Cross shelter in the Sunnyside (Wash.) Community Center on Thursday. A chemical fire continued to smolder Thursday in Grandview, Wash., where about 100 homes remained evacuated due to potentially toxic smoke.

Judge Janet Smith, who heads an inquiry into Shipman's crimes, said that he killed up to 15 patients while working as a trainee doctor at Pontefract General Infirmary in northern England between 1971 and 1974.

Shipman, who committed suicide in his prison cell last year, was convicted in 2000 of killing 15 other patients while working as a family physician in Hyde, near Manchester in northern England.

In its first report, the inquiry determined that he had killed at least 200 more over a period of 23 years.

**Casablanca terror attack:** Italy's top criminal court has blocked the extradition to Morocco of a terror suspect alleged to have been involved in the 2003 Casablanca suicide bombing news reports said Thursday.

Mohammed Rafik, a Moroccan who has lived in Italy since 1998, was arrested in October 2003 with two other Moroccan men. They were all alleged to have ties to the Muslim extremist movement Salafia Jihadia, which Moroccan officials have blamed for the Casablanca attack.

Rafik has denied the charges.

**Ex-British soldier with arsenal:** A soldier who turned his home into an arsenal after being invalided out of the Army was jailed for two years Thursday.

Michael Elgal spent years filling his apartment with an arsenal of explosives, chemicals and replica weaponry, prosecutors told his trial at London's Southwark Crown Court.

"The possession of items such as these has to be treated seriously by the courts," Justice Rodney McKinnon said in handing down the sentence. "They will not tolerate anybody keeping prohibited weapons such as these in these circumstances and a sentence must be passed to mark that."

Prosecutor Paul Taylor told the trial that Elgal joined the Army in 1988, but was invalided out the following year after being diagnosed with flat feet.

**Kosovo war crimes:** A Serb army general sought by the U.N. war crimes tribunal for alleged atrocities committed in Kosovo will surrender voluntarily, the government said Friday, amid intense pressure to hand over him and others from the United States and the European Union.

Gen. Vladimir Lazarevic, a military commander in Kosovo during the 1999 war in the province, will surrender to the tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands, by the end of next week, said a government statement.

The statement added that Lazarevic agreed to surrender after a meeting with Serbia's Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica. Lazarevic reportedly told Kostunica that he was innocent but that it was his duty to

"help his country."

**Afghan election:** President Hamid Karzai on Friday urged organizers of Afghanistan's parliamentary election to hold the vote this spring, but acknowledged an uphill struggle to keep the country's democratic transition on schedule.

Afghans are supposed to elect members for a National Assembly in April or May, though most observers expect a delay because U.N. and Afghan organizers are not ready. Foreign Minister Abdullah said Thursday the vote could be postponed until summer.

The election would complete a U.N.-sponsored process to restore the Afghan political system begun after a U.S. bombing campaign drove out the former Taliban government at the end of 2001.



Karzai

**Terror arrests in Pakistan:** Police arrested 23 Afghans in raids in the Pakistani border city of Quetta on suspicion of links with Taliban and Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network, officials said Friday.

The suspects, who included a former deputy governor and ex-police chief in Kabul, were captured from three neighborhoods of the city late Thursday and were being interrogated, said Chaudhry Mohammed Yaqub, the police chief in southwestern Baluchistan province, of which Quetta is the capital.

He said the detainees had held "important positions during Taliban's tenure" in Afghanistan, and "we suspect that some of them have close links with al-Qaeda."

**Israeli-Palestinian conflict:** Israel's army chief ordered troops to halt operations in the Gaza Strip on Friday and to scale back raids in the West Bank, as hundreds of Palestinian police deployed in the volatile central and southern parts of the territory.

The army chief, Lt. Gen. Moshe Yaalon, said Israeli troops could only go after militants with his approval. The order would significantly limit Israeli military action against extremist groups — but was still short of a public declaration of a cease-fire with Palestinians to seal a truce with militants.

"We call upon the Israelis to announce a full stop to violence against Palestinians everywhere, to match our commitment to stop violence against Israelis everywhere," Palestinian Cabinet minister Saeb Erekat said.

Stories and photo from The Associated Press

# Polling sites take shape despite resistance

BY JOSEPH GORDONO  
AND TERRY BOYD

Stars and Stripes

The massive, wide-ranging security effort by U.S. and Iraqi troops for Sunday's historic elections rounded into shape Friday, even as sporadic fighting continued in flashpoint cities throughout the country.

In Ramadi, U.S. forces said they have established 10 polling stations throughout the city — five manned by U.S. Marines and five by Army troops of the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division. Security inside the polls will be provided by Iraqi troops.

By late Friday, U.S. military officials said insurgents attacked several of the polling stations with weapons ranging from mortars to sniper fire to rocket-propelled grenades. Insurgent snipers wounded one U.S. soldier and an Iraqi Special Police commando Friday at different polling stations, officials said.

Roadside bombs were detonated near several joint patrols in the city, but no casualties were reported.

U.S. and Iraqi soldiers began constructing the actual voting mechanisms Friday, setting up ballot boxes, registration tables and metal detectors to screen voters. Members of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, who will run the vote, were on their way to the polling stations under U.S. guard, officials said.

At the same time, patrols spread through the neighborhoods near polling stations, hoping to disrupt insurgent attacks before they could be launched. A joint U.S.-Iraqi patrol in downtown Ramadi — where gunfights and bombings are a near-daily occurrence — turned up at least one cache of weapons and explosives Friday.

Soldiers from Company D, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, found the weapons in a vegetable stand.

Soldiers in Ramadi say the biggest threat on election day could come from suicide bombers. Soldiers say they have received intelligence reports indicating as many as two-dozen female suicide bombers from Syria have been deployed in Ramadi, ready to strike election sites.

U.S. soldiers have been ordered to carry gas masks through the election for fear that a chemical agent — anything from tear gas to a nerve agent — could be used



PHOTOS BY JOSEPH GORDONO/Stars and Stripes

**Above:** Soldiers with Company D, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment go through a box of election materials at a polling station in Ramadi, Iraq, on Friday. Security preparations for Sunday's vote are largely in place, officials said. **Right:** Soldiers with Company D put together a pair of metal detectors to be used at a polling place in Ramadi.

by insurgents to scare off a potential crowd of voters.

## Will anyone vote?

In the area near Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's hometown, few would be surprised if no one cast a ballot.

On Friday, 40 sheiks gathered here, home to 1st Infantry Division's 1st Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, nicknamed "Quarterhorse Cav."

The sheiks visited Forward Operating Base Wilson in nearby Ad Dwar to learn the mechanics of the election from an Iraqi voting official.

While the turnout likely will be relatively small and attacks an almost certainty, participation may be surprising, at least in certain areas, say soldiers and officers here.

"The good people will vote," said Spc. Jacob Garrison, 22, a Quarterhorse soldier. On daily foot patrols, he said he meets lots

of good people, even in the heart of the heart of the Sunni Iron Triangle.

Many of the ordinary people in Ad Dwar like the Americans, "the ones who aren't shooting at us," he said.

But a significant number of insurgents operate in the area, and during the past few days, three of 16 voting sites have been attacked, said Capt. Paul Krattiger, 31, Troop C commander.

All the electoral commission officials quit, so Army officials turned to the sheiks and local volunteers were recruited at the last minute to oversee

voting.

If it fails, "it won't be for a lack of effort. Not because soldiers weren't trying to make [the vote] happen," Krattiger said.

Security will make a difference early Sunday, Krattiger said. If Iraqis hang back to see how the day is developing, "and Al-Jazeera isn't reporting a lot of violence," more may venture out, he said.

In their area of responsibility, the Iraqi Army may make a huge difference. Garrison said. Though 1st ID officials have given up on local police, Iraqi soldiers assigned to Wilson have improved drastically, he said.

People here lived well under Saddam, Krattiger said. "Some are realizing to live well again, they're going to have to vote."

"We've done everything we can to secure the vote," Garrison said. Now, soldiers will see if their desires and the dreams of the Iraqi people will intersect, Garrison said. "I want to go home, and they want a home."

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# 5 GIs killed as insurgents attack voting stations

BY ROBERT H. REID

The Associated Press

**BAGHDAD** — Insurgents killed five American soldiers in separate attacks Friday in Baghdad and blasted more polling stations across the country, sending a message that if Iraqis suffer deaths and injuries on election day, "you have only yourselves to blame."

A U.S. Army OH-58 Kiowa helicopter crashed Friday night in southwestern Baghdad, U.S. officials said. There was no word on the fate of the crew. Four Iraqi police were killed in a car bombing in Baghdad.

With crucial national elections only two days away, Iraqi officials announced the arrests of three more purported lieutenants of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, including the Jordanian terror mastermind's military adviser and chief of operations in Baghdad.

Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih told reporters that U.S. and Iraqi authorities were closing in on al-Zarqawi, head of al-Qaida's affiliate in Iraq who is believed responsible for many of the car-bombings, kidnappings and decapitations of foreigners in Iraq.

Despite Salih's assurances, al-Zarqawi's

## U.S. helicopter crashes in southwestern Baghdad

group posted a new Web message Friday warning Iraqis that they could get hit by shelling or other attacks if they approach polling stations, which it called "the centers of atheism and of vice."

"We have warned you, so don't blame us. You have only yourselves to blame," it said.

Sunni Arab extremists have vowed to disrupt Sunday's national elections, in which Iraqis will choose a 275-member National Assembly and provincial councils in the country's 18 provinces.

Officials fear a low turnout in Sunday's vote could tarnish the legitimacy of the new government.

In Baghdad, U.S. Ambassador John Negroponte insisted some Sunnis will turn out to vote. "Sunnis don't only live in some of these beleaguered provinces, they live here in Baghdad, they live in other parts of the country," Negroponte said on CBS's "The Early Show." "I think you're going to see participation across the board."

Nevertheless, opposition to the election appears strong in Sunni areas, and many

voters there are expected to stay away, either out of disgust over the process or fear of the insurgents.

Insurgents, meanwhile, stepped up their own attacks, killing the five American soldiers in three separate strikes in northern, western and southern Baghdad, according to the U.S. command. More than 1,411 U.S. troops have been killed in Iraq since fighting began in March 2003.

American troops and insurgents exchanged fire on a major Baghdad thoroughfare. The crackle of gunfire could be heard over the moon call to prayer. U.S. fighter jets thundered through the skies over Baghdad throughout the morning in a show of force against the militants.

Those measures, however, have not been enough to stop the violence. A suicide car bomber exploded his vehicle Friday in Baghdad's Douira neighborhood, killing four Iraqi police. Hours later, another car bomb exploded on the neighborhood's main road, damaging a school where voters are to cast ballots Sunday. No one was hurt.

Elsewhere, insurgents hit designated polling centers in at least six major cities across the country. Gunmen attacked a school to be used as a polling station in Kirkuk, killing one policeman, officials said.

In southern Iraq, a roadside bomb hit an Iraqi police vehicle, killing one officer and wounding three others, said police Lt. Col. Karim al-Zaydi. The attack occurred in the town of Zubair, south of the port city of Basra.

Also Friday, insurgents shelled a U.S. Marine base south of Baghdad, injuring three American troops and three civilians, the military said.

The arrested al-Zarqawi associates included Salah Suleiman al-Lohbi, head of his group's Baghdad operation, who met with al-Zarqawi more than 40 times over three months, said Qasim Dawoud, a top security adviser to Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi.

Dawoud said Ali Hamad Yasir al-Isawi, another associate, was also captured. Dawoud said the two arrests took place in mid-January but gave few details.

Also captured was al-Zarqawi's military adviser, a 31-year-old Iraqi named Muhammad Qais, 31, said Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih.

# American troops prepare to step back on Sunday

BY JOSEPH GIORDONO  
AND JASON CHUDY

Stars and Stripes

**RAMADI, Iraq** — U.S. troops in Iraq have been instrumental in attempting to stabilize the country before Sunday's national elections. But once the polls open, they will be asked to play a secondary role.

At polling stations throughout the country, U.S. troops will provide the outer cordon of security, with Iraqi forces guarding the voting centers. And with political sensitivity about the election process high, the military has been educating its soldiers on what they should and should not say or do in the run-up to the vote.

"DO appear completely NEUTRAL in all matters relating to the Iraqi Elections," reads part of a "Soldier Information Card" distributed to troops throughout Iraq.

"DON'T appear to dislike any Iraqi parties or candidates," it later advises.

The message started at the top and worked its way down through the 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment in Baghdad's Kadhimiya neighborhood. Battalion officers down to platoon and squad leaders were given briefings and shown PowerPoint slides covering basic election information. They then met with the soldiers of their platoons and squads.

"Basically, we're not supposed to support any party if anyone asks us any questions," said Spc. James Bonanno of Company A's 1st Platoon.

But, he said, those questions aren't normally forthcoming.

"The Iraqis don't usually ask us questions about the election," he said. "They're more interested in

us than in what's going on in their country. I'm sure if I spoke Arabic, they'd probably start a conversation about the elections."

"The majority don't speak English well enough to get into conversations," said Pvt. Ralph Young of 1st Platoon. "The extent of our conversations are, 'What's your name, where are you from?'"

Staff Sgt. James Mastrodomenico, a squad leader and mortar section leader with Company C, said the information card has come in handy in his dealings with prospective Iraqi voters, although most of the questions deal with election security.

And election security is key in the battalion's area.

The 4-31 soldiers have nearly 50 percent of the polling sites in the 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division's area of operations, which covers most of northwest Baghdad and Abu Ghraib.

Mastrodomenico said that at one prospective polling site, a man and his three children who live nearby approached and asked if the building was a polling site and if he should move out for the elections.

"The biggest thing when we get approached is, 'Are the elections going to happen?'" he said. "We tell them, 'Of course,' and 'What they should get out and have their voices heard.'"

Soldiers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, a 2nd Infantry Division unit that deployed from South Korea to Iraq, are responsible for polling stations in the restive city of Ramadi, where insurgents and U.S. forces clash nearly every day.

In recent days, the soldiers have been patrolling with Iraqi forces. They have largely found it



JOSEPH GIORDONO/Stars and Stripes

**Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment put up posters in Ramadi on Jan. 5 urging Iraqi citizens to participate in Sunday's elections.**

easier to let the Iraqis hand out the election material, both because of the language barrier and the perception the Iraqis are leading the process.

"To see the Iraqi soldiers here is really good for the people. And it shows them that we are working toward a point where Iraqis will eventually be responsible for their own security," said 2nd Lt. Ted Tsunayoshi, a platoon leader with Company C, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment.

At traffic checkpoints and during cordon-and-search operations, the Iraqi troops are the ones encouraging the Iraqis to vote. At times, though, the advantages of having Iraqi troops are lost in the enthusiasm for the upcoming elections.

The Iraqis, not bound by the same rules as the Americans, are more than willing to debate politics with their countrymen, often at length, resulting in a slowdown of operations.

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## Soldier information card

### DOs:

■ DO appear completely NEUTRAL in all matters relating to the Iraqi Elections.

■ DO hand out Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq-approved election information materials when Iraqis ask you about Iraqi Elections.

■ DO refer Iraqis with election questions to their local Independent Election Commission of Iraq office (when established) or www.electiraq.org.

■ DO follow published Rules of Engagement (ROE).

■ DO report all observed "political" gatherings to your chain of command.

■ DO follow unit SOPs regarding contact with the media.

■ DO continue to follow all Force Protection rules.

### DON'Ts:

■ DON'T appear to favor any Iraqi parties or candidates (remain neutral).

■ DON'T appear to dislike any Iraqi candidate or party.

■ DON'T enter into "political" debates about elections.

■ DON'T gather near registration or polling centers UNLESS directed to do so by your chain of command.

■ DON'T interfere with Iraqi political gatherings.

■ DON'T interfere with media coverage of Iraqi elections.

Source: Department of Defense

## Troops foil poll attack

Pennsylvania National Guardsmen joined with Iraqi soldiers to foil an insurgent plan to bomb a polling place near Tikrit, Iraq, last weekend, according to a news release from the Tikrit-based Task Force Danger.

The soldiers from Company A of the 1st Battalion, 112th Infantry Regiment and the 201st Iraqi Army Battalion stopped a car carrying an Iraqi policeman and another man at the checkpoint in Kadisia on Jan. 22, the release said.

In the car, the soldiers found 120 mm artillery round wired as a homemade bomb. When questioned, the men confessed they had intended to plant it at a nearby polling site, according to the release. An explosive-ordnance disposal team came to the site and destroyed the bomb.

The 1-112th Infantry is based in Erie, Pa., and currently is serving in Tikrit as part of Task Force 1-18, under the leadership of the 1st Infantry Division.

From staff reports



Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army

**This 120mm artillery round wired as a homemade bomb was found in a car that was stopped at a checkpoint in Kadisia, Iraq on Jan. 22.**

# President Bush: U.S. ready to leave Iraq if leaders ask

Stars and Stripes

**WASHINGTON** — President Bush said in an interview with *The New York Times* on Thursday that he would withdraw American forces from Iraq if the new government elected Sunday asked, but that he expected Iraq's first democratically elected leaders would want the troops to remain as helpers, not as occupiers.

"I've, you know, heard the voices of the people that presumably will be in a position of responsibility after these elections, although you never know," Bush told the *Times*. "But it seems like most of the leadership there understands that there will be a need for coalition troops at least until Iraqis are able to fight."

He did not say who he expected would win. But asked if, as a matter of principle, the United States

would pull out of Iraq at the request of a new government, he said: "Absolutely. This is a sovereign government. They're on their feet."

Some members of the administration had made similar pledges, but this was the first time Mr. Bush did so.

The president acknowledged that many Iraqis still viewed the United States as an occupying force, though he stopped short of endorsing the view of a growing number of Republicans that the sheer size of the American presence in Iraq was worsening the violence by presenting insurgents with a large target.

"A fundamental question also that I think a lot of Iraqis understand — and I do, too — is how do we make sure the Iraqi citizens view U.S. troops as helpers, not as occupiers," he said.



# Unit must help prepare 3 districts for vote

## Area of capital under Polar Bears should be calm

BY JASON CHUDY  
Stars and Stripes

BAGHDAD — Preparations for Sunday's elections are affecting soldiers throughout Iraq, but probably none more than the Polar Bears of 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment.

The battalion's area of operations encompasses the three northwestern Baghdad districts of Kadhimiya, Hurriya and Shula. Altogether, they have 124 polling sites, which represent nearly 48 percent of the sites in 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division's sector and about 25 percent of the city's total.

"That's tremendous for one battalion," said Capt. Eric Keil, the battalion's fire support and information operations officer.

Polling sites were chosen by the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq. A list of the sites was passed down to Iraqi National Guard, police and U.S. forces.

With between 700,000 and 1 million residents in their area — about of the city's 5 million population — these three districts have a higher percentage of polling sites than many other areas.

"I think a lot has to do with the



JASON CHUDY/Stars and Stripes

**Iraqi workers lower a cement barrier onto the sidewalk of a bridge crossing the Tigris River in Kadhimiya on Thursday night. The barrier will be used by security forces during the election. Barriers have been placed by the 10th Mountain Division's 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment throughout their area of operations.**

territory we have," Keil said of their operating area. "Having a Shia majority ... it's a fairly safe place to vote."

The country's Shiite majority, for the most part, is backing the elections and the battalion's neighborhoods are relatively less dangerous than many others.

Keil said they also expect voters from other areas to come and vote in one of those three districts.

U.S. forces are trying to remain

behind the scenes, letting the Iraqis direct the entire election process as much as possible.

"They are running the whole election," Keil said. "They are going to be the face of this election."

Iraqi police and Iraqi national guardsmen, rather than U.S. troops, will be at all the polling sites in their area.

"I think they're excited and we're excited (for them)," he said. "For the IP and ING, we feel

it's their show and they're ready to handle it."

Soldiers have been checking all the polling sites to ensure that they have the required Iraqi security forces.

They've checked everything from the number of police and guardsmen, to their ammunition supply and whether or not they've been getting meals.

Some hadn't been getting food regularly, so U.S. troops stepped in, providing special Meals,

Ready-to-Eat-type servings that met Muslim guidelines.

And the soldiers have been setting up barriers. Lots of barriers.

"It's a scarce resource," Keil said of the barriers. "We're doing the best we can; everybody wants them."

The battalion has also been placing concrete barriers and concertina wire around polling sites and other key areas in an effort to bolster their defense against car bombs and other insurgent attacks.

It has also repositioned barriers as polling sites change, as election officials move some to more secure locations.

"We'll be refining our security plan up to, and through, the elections," Keil said.

To help them meet that plan and meet their other operational requirements, the battalion has been augmented with a company from the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, and a mechanized platoon from the 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment.

The elections, said Spc. Aaron Locke of Company A's Headquarters Platoon, have been taking up much of the battalion's time. "In the last week, 100 percent," he said.

"I think we're stretched to the limit," Keil said. "We can do the mission but we're at our limit."

For the soldiers, and many Iraqis alike, Sunday's elections won't come soon enough.

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# Baghdad election-info distribution goes smoothly

## Regiment: ballots arrived at poll sites with few problems

BY JASON CHUDY  
Stars and Stripes

BAGHDAD — Soldiers sat in front of a fire early Thursday evening, talking and joking about everything from women to war but practically ignoring the handful of trucks that passed in or out of a dusty warehouse a few dozen meters away in the city's Kadhimiya neighborhood.

Whether or not they even noticed the trucks, the soldiers from Company C, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, were witness to the first tangible steps toward Sunday's historic election. Although the trucks roll in empty, they leave full of election material — voter registration information, election machines and, most importantly, ballots.

The battalion's area of operation includes one of Baghdad's four polling distribution sites. For the past few days, trucks have been in and out from sunrise to sunset with material destined for 31 election district offices and then to the 300 to 350 polling sites themselves.

The soldiers, meanwhile, have been using the warehouse complex as a forward patrol base, conducting operations and providing security for the site with Iraqi Na-

tional Guardsmen and some non-Iraqi civilian guards.

Of the dozens of soldiers in the area, only two will occasionally make the short walk to the warehouse. Capt. John O'Keefe, the battalions' civil/military officer, and Sgt. Maj. Roy Souvenir, operations sergeant major, have spent the past few days helping the three Iraqi election officials at 30 or so workers.

There really isn't too much to do, they agree. Mostly, they ask questions about how things are going and if anyone needs their help.

"We haven't stepped in [much]," he said. "It's going OK. I think our warehouse is going better than the other three."

"It's gone relatively smooth," said Souvenir. "We're not looking for perfection, we're looking for cooperation. There have been a few glitches, but nothing that couldn't be overcome."

The main difficulty came from



PHOTOS BY JASON CHUDY/Stars and Stripes

**A truck carrying election material passes a Humvee from 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, on Thursday. Soldiers from the battalion are sharing a warehouse complex with the election material, which is being sent to election district offices before heading to the polling sites.**

the trucks contracted to carry election materials to the district offices. A handful just didn't show up.

Instead of causing a bottleneck, Iraqi National Guard troops stepped in with their own vehicles and a couple of loads were even taken on U.S. military vehicles.

"I've dropped off two loads and this is the third load," said 1st Lt. Mike Campbell, an adviser with Company A, 303rd Iraqi National Guard Battalion, as his soldiers

waited to escort a truck out of the site.

"We're going to continue through the night," Campbell said. From the district offices they will be taking the election materials out to the polling sites themselves.

"They'll be working 'til it's done," he said. "Obviously before the elections, but we want to get it done the day before."

"We'll go all night and all day tomorrow to do it," he said, "and the Iraqis will do it. It's been

**An Iraqi worker carries election material from a warehouse in Baghdad's Kadhimiya neighborhood on Thursday afternoon.**

great."

Campbell said that the national guardsmen know that if they don't get the material to the polling sites, they won't get to vote themselves.

"They're anxious to vote for the first time," he said. "They're willing to put in the hard work and sacrifice it takes to make democracy work."

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# Iraqi expatriates begin casting ballots

BY DEE-ANN DURBIN  
The Associated Press

SOUTHGATE, Michigan — Joyful tears and frequent applause marked the start of U.S. voting Friday among Iraqi expatriates choosing a new government for their homeland.

Votes were cast beginning at 7 a.m. inside an abandoned store in the Detroit suburb of Southgate. Periodically, cheers would erupt from one of the 15 polling stations.

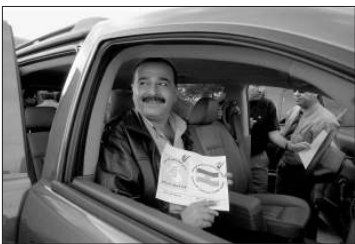
"We feel happy now. This is like America, this voting," said Zohra Yess, 64, who moved to Inkster nine years ago. "We want fair, good government."

Nearly 26,000 Iraqi expatriates in the United States are expected to vote in Iraq's election. They are voting in four other U.S. cities: Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington and Nashville, Tenn. Iraqis also are voting in 13 other countries, not including Iraq.

In Egypt, dozens of Iraqi cast votes by midday, even though the country was left off the list of countries hosting official centers for Iraqis to cast absentee ballots.

Amin Sultan Amani was once terrified of the Iraqi Embassy in Cairo. On Friday, he stood in his garage, smiling after placing his vote in a ballot box.

"I feel like I'm Iraqi now," he said.



**Ahmed Mohammed of Plano, Texas, holds a handout suggesting how he and others should vote in the Iraq elections. Mohammed and members of the Kurdish Democratic Party in Dallas drove to Nashville, Tenn., to register to vote for the election. Nashville is one of five U.S. cities where Iraqi expatriates can go to participate in overseas balloting.**

Organizers of the virtual poll in Cairo said they would collect the votes and send them to Jordan to be counted there by the International Organization for Migration, the Geneva-based body managing the vote for Iraqis living abroad.

Jordan is one of the 14 countries where Iraqis can officially vote, but the IOM has said it will not recognize any results coming from outside those countries.

In Stockholm, thousands of exiled Iraqis, some wearing traditional Iraqi costumes under heavy winter coats, lined up amid heavy security in freezing temperatures outside Scandinavian polling stations Friday to vote.

Sweden harbors one of the world's largest Iraqi exile communities — about 50,000 people — many of them ethnic Kurds who fled persecution by Saddam Hussein's former regime.

Voting began Friday at 7 a.m. in Stockholm and the southern city of Göteborg, where police surveyed the crowd and voters passed through metal detectors before entering voting booths.

For Mun Berzini, a Kurd who has lived in Stockholm for seven years, voting was a new experience.

"Under Saddam's rule, Kurds weren't allowed to vote," he said. "This is great for Kurdistan, if we can get Kurds elected to the Iraqi parliament."

And in Damascus, Syria, where the autocratic government had reservations about hosting the vote, Iraqis filed into schools and other makeshift polling stations.

Expatriate Iraqis were voting in 14 countries around the world, but in the Middle East, the election represented a rare exercise in democracy.

Security was tight at the 10 voting stations in Damascus and its suburbs, with private security guards frisking voters before they were allowed to enter.

According to the Geneva-based International Organization for Migration, there are 201,000 Iraqis living in Syria, but only 8 percent, or 16,581, have registered to vote. Many of the Iraqis here fled around the time of the U.S. invasion of Iraq to escape worsening security conditions.

The U.S. polls will be open through Sunday, which is election day in Iraq.

A total of 25,946 Iraqis registered to vote in the United States during the Jan. 17-25 registration period. The largest portion of those voters were in the Detroit area, which had 9,714 registrars.

Voters will select the 275-member assembly that will draft Iraq's new constitution.

Turnout was light early Friday in suburban Washington, where about where about 2,000 Iraqi expatriates are registered to vote.

Only a handful of voters cast ballots in the first 90 minutes at the station in New Carrollton, Maryland.

Adl Almusassarah, 30, traveled from Denver to Nashville, Tenn., arriving at the polling site an hour early so he could be first in line.

"We pray for the election to go well," said Almusassarah, who has been in the United States for 12 years. "I wish well to all the parties — for all the people in Iraq."

The U.S. turnout was only around 10 percent of the 240,000 Iraqi-Americans who were thought to be eligible. Jeremy Copeland, a spokesman for the International Organization for Migration, which organized the vote in 14 countries, said he never really knew how many people were eligible.

## Big Shiite wins create uncertainties for Iraq

BY SORAYA SARHADDI NELSON  
AND HUDA AHMED  
Knight Ridder Newspapers

BAGHDAD — Iraq's January 30 elections are almost certain to bring Iraq's Shiite Muslim majority to power after decades of brutal repression.

That prospect has fueled fear and uncertainty inside the country, unsettled Iraq's Sunni Muslim neighbors, and created new uncertainties about what kind of Iraq will replace Saddam Hussein's dictatorship, and even about whether Iraq will remain one country or dissolve into civil war.

How the Shiites rule Iraq, and how their Iraq relates to its Sunni neighbors and to Iran, a Shiite Islamic republic, could determine whether the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq produces a stable democracy, another Islamic republic or a new hotbed of terrorism and trouble in the heart of the Persian Gulf.

For most of the last century, Iraq's Sunni minority, about 20 percent of the population, ruled the Shiites and minority groups such as the Kurds and the Turks with extreme brutality. Saddam slaughtered thousands of Shiites and Kurds, but the country's main fault line is between the Shiite majority and the Sunnis, who consider the Shiites apostates for their religious beliefs.

On Sunday, Shiite-dominated political coalitions are almost certain to sweep the elections, and

with some mainstream Sunni parties boycotting the vote, the first challenge of the new government will be to dispel doubts about its legitimacy.

"It isn't a real election," said retired Jordanian Gen. Ali Shukri, an expert on Iran and Iraq, summing up the view of many critics. "Geographically one half of Iraq and demographically, one third of Iraq are not voting. There has to be a parliament that rules Iraq. How does that happen without the acquiescence of the Sunnis? Can you really write the constitution for all of Iraq in that circumstance? It's mission impossible."

If they're to avoid further strife, the Shiites will have to involve Sunni leaders in the government and, just as important, in the drafting of a permanent constitution.

Within the leading Shiite coalition — the United Iraqi Alliance — debate has been fierce over the role of religious leaders in the government, and over whether Iraq, long a secular country, should be ruled, Iranian-style, by religious leaders. The Alliance was set up only after the country's leading Shiite cleric, Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, called on squabbling Shiite factions to unite.

"We will have a constitution-based democracy that has real respect for the freedom of Iraqis," added Abdulaziz al-Hakim, a cleric who heads the supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, a key Alliance party.



**Kurdish women's rights activist Leila Rahimi, right, delivers and explains election pamphlets and materials to women in the suburbs of Arbil, Iraq. Kurds are expected to vote in overwhelming numbers in Iraq.**

## Female candidates focus on getting rights

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Amal Ka-shif al-Ghita wears the type of all-enveloping black cloak that women in Iraq have worn for centuries. But when talk turns to politics, she sounds decidedly 21st century.

"We have to ensure that the divorced women are not left homeless," al-Ghita said in a no-nonsense voice. She also wants better schools for girls and new laws to protect children's rights and prevent rape.

Al-Ghita is one of hundreds of

Iraqi women now running in Sunday's national elections. They are almost guaranteed to win a significant chunk of seats in the National Assembly, because by law they must make up 30 percent of each list of candidates.

Iraqis will vote for lists of candidates, rather than individuals, and the alliance endorsed by Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the top Shiite cleric, is expected to fare best.

The law means Iraqi women could have a strong influence on the policies developed by the country's new government. It's a big change for Al-Ghita, who paid

dearly for her activism under Saddam Hussein's regime. A pharmacist, she was denied work and her grown son was imprisoned.

Al-Ghita sees her campaign as a natural extension of her role as head of an Islamic charity that cares for women and children. "We should protect the rights of the family as a whole — the man, the woman and the children."

Many female candidates, speaking recently of their reasons for deciding to run, describe suffering under Saddam's regime and the change that took place in their lives when it fell.

All say their country faces many challenges.

# Hawaiian town copes with loss

## 27 troops from Kaneohe were killed in helicopter crash

By B.J. REYES

The Associated Press

KANEHOE, Hawaii — Overcast skies shadowed this military town as residents grieved for the 27 troops from the Kaneohe Bay base who died in the U.S. military's deadliest day so far in the Iraq war.

The bayside community saw banner headlines Thursday spreading the news that the Kaneohe servicemen were among the 31 killed when their helicopter went down Wednesday in a sandstorm. It was the heaviest loss of Hawaii-based troops since Pearl Harbor.

Col. Owen Lovejoy, executive officer of the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, choked back tears as he described the moment he found out the crash had claimed so many lives under his command.

"It's difficult because you look at Marines like brothers," he said, standing near a memorial to the battle of Iwo Jima.

In a town where a yellow ribbon "Support Our Troops" magnet adorned the back of nearly every car, it was hard to find anyone who hadn't heard of the tragedy.

"The sheer number of 27 people from a little tiny place on a little tiny island in the Pacific is certainly making a major impact," said the Rev. Wendell Silva, who offered a prayer for the dead and their families.

"I opened up the paper and said, 'Oh



A U.S. flag waves over a World War II memorial near the entrance of Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe, Hawaii, Thursday. A sailor and 26 of the 30 Marines killed in Wednesday's helicopter crash in Iraq were based at Kaneohe.

no," said Agnes Yamaguchi, 74. "I just don't want to read about it anymore. It's so hard. They're so young."

Although most of the troops lost in the crash were based in Hawaii, the others came from coast to coast, from Florida to New Hampshire, from Ohio to Oregon. One was a 28-year-old who never got the chance to meet his son born on Christmas Eve.

The Pentagon identified the sailor killed

as Petty Officer 3rd Class John D. House, of Ventura, Calif., and late Thursday released the names of 16 of the Marines. Families identified seven others.

The CH-53E Super Stallion went down in western Iraq as troops while transporting troops for security operations in preparation of Sunday's elections.

"We think it's an accident, but we don't know for sure," Lovejoy said.

# I.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Thursday, Jan. 27, 2005, at least 1,418 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,085 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said.

The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is nine higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. EST Thursday.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared the major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,280 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 976 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ A Marine was killed Thursday when insurgents launched a mortar attack at a base near Iskandariyah, Iraq, about 30 miles south of Baghdad.

■ A soldier died Thursday in a gunshot accident on a base near Tikrit, Iraq.

The latest identifications reported by the Defense Department:

■ Army Sgt. William S. Kinzer Jr., 27, of Jacksonville, Fla., died Wednesday in Duliyah, Iraq, when a grenade hit his patrol, assigned to the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Schweinfurt, Germany.

■ Killed Wednesday in Iraq's Anbar province, assigned to the Marine Corps Reserve's 4th Combat Engineer Battalion, 4th Marine Division, Lynchburg, Va., Marine Cpl. Jonathan W. Bowling, 23, of Patrick, Va.; Marine Lance Cpl. Karl R. Linn, 20, of Chesterfield, Va.; Marine Sgt. Jesse W. Strong, 24, of Irasburg, Vt.; Marine Cpl. Christopher L. Weaver, 24, of Fredericksburg, Va.

■ Killed Wednesday in a helicopter crash near Rutbah, Iraq, assigned to Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 361, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.: Marine Capt. Paul C. Alaniz, 32, of Corpus Christi, Texas; Marine Cpl. John L. Gordon, 30, of Midlothian, Texas; Marine Staff Sgt. Dexter S. Kimble, 30, of Houston.

■ Killed Wednesday in a helicopter crash near Rutbah, Iraq, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Hawaii: Marine Lance Cpl. Jonathan E. Etterling, 21, of Wheelersburg, Ohio; Marine Lance Cpl. Brian C. Hopper, 21, of Wynne, Ark.; Marine Lance Cpl. Saad J. Fakhrani-Torshiji Jr., 24, of Fort Worth, Texas; Marine Cpl. Sean P. Kelly, 23, of Gloucester, N.J.; Marine Lance Cpl. Allan Klein, 34, of Clinton Township, Mich.; Marine Cpl. James L. Moore, 24, of Roseburg, Ore.; Marine Lance Cpl. Mourad Ragimov, 20, San Diego; Marine Lance Cpl. Richard D. Rairdan, 20, San Antonio; Marine Lance Cpl. Hector Ramos, 20, of Aurora, Ill.; Marine Lance Cpl. Darrell J. Schumann, 25, of Hampton, Va.; Marine 1st Lt. Duane M. Shumey, 30, of Vallejo, Calif.; Marine Cpl. Matthew R. Smith, 24, of West Valley, Utah; Marine Lance Cpl. Joseph B. Spence, 24, of Scotts Valley, Calif.

■ Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class John D. House, 28, of Ventura, Calif., assigned to Naval Medical Clinic Hawaii, Marine Corps Units Detachment, Pearl Harbor.

## Iraq nuclear program

OSLO, Norway — A scientist considered the father of Iraq's nuclear program said Thursday that his nation would have developed atomic weapons in the early 1990s and Saddam Hussein tried to spread the invasion of Kuwait.

The invasion sparked the U.S.-led Operation Desert Storm in 1991, which drove Iraq out of Kuwait and marked the end of Baghdad's nuclear and biological weapons program, said Jafar Dhia al-Jarraf, the scientific head of Iraq's nuclear weapons program.

The British-educated scientist, with a doctorate in physics from the University of Birmingham, said the quest for nuclear weapons began with Israeli warplanes bombing the legal Iraqi nuclear reactor at Tuwaitha, near Baghdad, where he had worked, in June 1981.

## Iraq prison abuse case

OSNABRUECK, Germany — A British soldier who witnessed the mistreatment of Iraqi civilians testified at the court-martial of three of his comrades Friday that he feels "disgusted" with his decision not to turn them in.

Sgt. Tom Syron recalled the day in May 2003, at a humanitarian aid warehouse near Basra when he came upon the scene of the alleged abuse. He testified he heard defendant Lance Cpl. Darren Larkin, 30, laughing and saw a group of soldiers standing around two naked Iraqi captives who allegedly moved to break up the situation.

Symon, who was a corporal at the time of the alleged assault, testified in his hands, he should have turned the soldiers in to authorities.

From The Associated Press

# ORAP expands to officers

By LISA BURGESS

Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — An agency that allows enlisted servicemen with war-zone experience to go home for two weeks' TDY to help with recruiting is being expanded to include officers.

In late December, officials at the Army's recruiting command at Fort Knox, Ky., decided to expand the Special Recruiter Assistance Program, or SRAP, to include enlisted soldiers who have served in Operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom and are now back in the United States.

The program has been further expanded to include officers, who must be age 28 or younger, stationed in the United States and veterans of Operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom.

During the 14-day recruiting duty, SRAP participants will spend in two 40-hour weeks working with personnel in the recruiting station nearest their hometown.

Duties may include speaking at college and community events, as well as participating in in-

terviews with local media, according to information provided on the program's Web site, [www.usarec.army.mil/orap/soliderap/control.asp](http://www.usarec.army.mil/orap/soliderap/control.asp)

SRAP participants can claim reimbursement for travel expenses and a per diem allowance for their temporary duty assignment, or TDY, time.

Once their recruiting obligation is complete, SRAP participants whose commanders have given prior approval may take personal leave, if they've earned it.

Another option for officers who want to do recruiting is a long-standing Army Command Cadet program called Officer Returning Alumni Program, or ORAP, which allows an officer to return to his college alma mater on permissive TDY status.

But unlike SRAP, this program isn't funded, so an officer is not reimbursed for time or expenses.

Officers interested should e-mail their completed applications directly to Maj. Mark Van Hout, retentions officer for Cadet Command, at [VanhoutMD@USACC.army.mil](mailto:VanhoutMD@USACC.army.mil).

E-mail Lisa Burgess at: [burgessl@stars.osd.mil](mailto:burgessl@stars.osd.mil)

# Official says Iraq border unstable

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Iraqis loyal to deposed leader Saddam Hussein, as well as Islamic extremists, are still slipping into the country from neighboring Syria and Iran to bolster the insurgency, the national security adviser to interim Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said Thursday.

"Unfortunately, we have two — if I can put it this way —

"naughty-boy" neighbors — Iran and Syria," Kasim Daoud said in a video-teleconference session from Baghdad with reporters at the Pentagon.

He said most of the infiltrations are from Iraq's western border, which it shares with Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and he accused Syrian authorities of conspiring to assist the insurgency.

Daoud offered no estimate of

the number of people infiltrating from either Syria or Iran.

Daoud said an effort to gain more Syrian cooperation to tighten the border, by establishing a joint U.S.-Syrian-Iraqi committee, has not yet yielded "any good responses from the Syrians."

The Syrian government denies it is assisting the insurgency.

Daoud said Iran also is guilty of "clear interference" in Iraq.

# Weaponized robots to join fight in Iraq

## Remote-controlled Army robot will be first armed device of its kind used in combat

By MICHAEL P. REGAN

The Associated Press

ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, N.J. — The rain is turning to snow on a blustery January morning, and all the men gathered in a parking lot here surely would prefer to be inside.

But the weather couldn't matter less to the robotic sharpshooters they are here to watch as it splashes under puddles, the barrel of its machine gun pointing the way like Pinocchio's nose.

The Army is preparing to send 18 of these remote-controlled robotic warriors to fight in Iraq beginning in March or April.

Made by a small Massachusetts company, the SWORDS, short for Special Weapons Observation Reconnaissance Detection Systems, will be the first armed robotic vehicles to see combat, years ahead of the larger Future Combat System vehicles currently under development by big defense contractors such as Lockheed Martin and General Dynamics Corp.

It's easy to humanize the SWORDS (a tendency robotics researchers say is only human) as it moves out of the flashy lobby of an office building and into the cold with nary a shiver.

Military officials compare the roughly three-foot-high robots favorably to human soldiers. They don't need to be trained, fed or clothed. They can be boxed up and rehearsed between wars. They never complain. And there are no letters to write home if they meet their demise in battle.

But officials are quick to point out that these are not the auton-

mous killer robots of science fiction. A SWORDS robot shoots only when its human operator presses a button after identifying a target on video shot by the robot's cameras.

"The only difference is that his weapon is not at his shoulder, it's up to half a mile away," said Bob Quinn, general manager of Talon robots for Foster-Miller Inc., the Waltham, Mass., company that makes the SWORDS. As one Marine fresh out of boot camp told Quinn upon seeing the robot: "This is my invisibility cloak."

Quinn said it was a "bootstrap development process" to convert a Talon robot, which has been in military service since 2000, from its main mission — defusing roadside bombs in Iraq — into the gun-slinging SWORDS.

It was a joint development process between the Army and Foster-Miller, a robotics firm bought in November by QinetiQ Group PLC, which is a partnership between the British Ministry of Defense and the Washington holding company The Carlyle Group.

Army officials and employees of the robotics firm heard from soldiers "who said 'My brothers are being killed out here. We love the EOD [explosive ordnance disposal], but let's put some weapons on it,'" said Quinn.

Working with soldiers and engineers at Picatinny Arsenal in New Jersey, it took just six months and only about \$2 million in development money to outfit a Talon with weapons, according to Quinn and Anthony Sebastio, a technology manager at Picatinny.

The Talon already had proven



AP photos

**Gary Marin, a design engineer for defense firm Foster-Miller, demonstrates the company's weaponized robot in Englewood Cliffs, N.J., on Friday. The Special Weapons Observation Reconnaissance Detection Systems will be the first armed robotic vehicles to see combat.**

itself to be pretty rugged. One was blown off the roof of a Humvee and into a nearby river by a roadside bomb in Iraq. Soldiers simply opened its shrapnel-pocked control unit and drove the robot out of the river, according to Quinn.

The \$200,000 armed version will carry standard-issue Squad Automatic Weapons, either the M249, which fires 5.56 mm rounds at a rate of 750 per minute, or the M240, which can fire about 700 to 1,000 7.62 mm rounds per minute. The SWORDS can fire about 300 rounds using the M249 before needing to reload.

All its optics equipment — the four cameras, night vision and zoom lenses — were already in the Army's inventory.

"It's important to stress that not everything has to be super high tech," said Sebastio. "You can integrate existing componentry and create a revolutionary capability."

The SWORDS in the parking lot at the headquarters of the cable news station CNBC had just finished showing off for the cameras, climbing stairs, scouting between cubicles, even broadcasting some of its video on the air. Its developers say its tracks, like those on a tank, can overcome rock piles and buried wires, though it needs a ride to travel faster than 4 mph.

Running on lithium ion batteries, it can operate for 1 to 4 hours at a time, depending on the mission. Operators work the robot using a 30-pound control unit which has two joysticks, a handful of buttons and a video screen. Quinn says that may eventually be replaced by a "Gameboy" type of controller hooked up to virtual reality goggles.

The Army has been testing it over the past year at Picatinny and the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland to ensure it won't malfunction and can stand up to radio jammers and other countermeasures.

Its developers say the SWORDS not only allows its operators to fire at enemies without exposing themselves to return fire, but also can make them more accurate.

A typical soldier who could hit a target the size of a basketball from 300 meters away could hit a target the size of a nickel with the SWORDS, according to Quinn.

The better accuracy largely stems from the fact that its gun is

into a single barrel, allowing for much more rapid firing.

"We've fired 70 shots at Picatinny and we were 70 for 70 hitting the bull's-eye," said Sebastio, boasting of the arsenal's success with a Vietnam-era rocket launcher mounted on a SWORDS.

There are bound to be many eyes watching SWORDS as it heads to battle. Its tracks one day will be followed by the larger vehicles of the Future Combat System, such as six-wheel-drive MULE under development by Lockheed Martin, a 2.5-ton vehicle with motors in each wheel hub to make it more likely to survive.

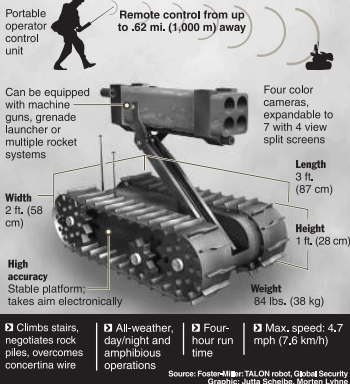
The Pentagon's research arm, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, also recently awarded contracts to aid research of robots that one day could be dropped into combat from airplanes and others meant to scale walls using electrostatic energy — also known as "static cling."

Many of the vehicles being developed for the FCS will have some autonomy, meaning they'll navigate rough terrain, avoid obstacles and make decisions about certain tasks on their own.

They may be able to offer cues to their operators when potential foes are near, but it's doubtful any of them ever will be allowed to make the decision to pull the trigger, according to Jim Lowrie, president of Perceptek Inc., a Littleton, Colo., firm that is developing robotics systems for the military. "For the foreseeable future, there always will be a person in the loop who makes the decision on friend or foe. That's a hard problem to determine autonomously," said Lowrie.

## War robots

U.S. military is planning to deploy 18 robots, small mobile weapon systems, to wage war against insurgents in Iraq.



Portable operator control unit

Remote control from up to .62 mi. (1,000 m) away

Can be equipped with machine guns, grenade launcher or multiple rocket systems

Width 2 ft. (58 cm)

High accuracy Stable platform; takes aim electronically

Four color cameras, expandable to 7 with 4 view split screens

Length 3 ft. (87 cm)

Height 1 ft. (28 cm)

Weight 84 lbs. (38 kg)

1 Climbs stairs, negotiates rock piles, overcomes concertina wire

2 All-weather, day/night and amphibious operations

3 Four-hour run time

4 Max. speed: 4.7 mph (7.6 km/h)

Source: Foster-Miller TALON robot. Combat Security Graphic: Jutta Scheibe, Morten Lyhne



## Vicenza GI guilty of assault, larceny

Stars and Stripes

VICENZA, Italy — A soldier stationed with the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment was found guilty in a general court-martial Thursday on several charges, including assault and taking a pair of confiscated handguns when he returned from his deployment to Iraq.

Spc. Bradley Morris, assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, was sentenced to three years in prison with forfeiture of all pay and allowances, reduction in rank to E-1 and a bad-conduct discharge, according to the Southern European Task Force (Airborne) public affairs office.

Morris pleaded guilty to larceny for taking the two handguns out of country, violating a U.S. Army Europe regulation against carrying knives more than 3 inches in length, and assault by offer.

He was arrested by Italian authorities in Milan on May 30 after an altercation with an Italian national during which he brandished a pair of knives, but did not actually use them. Police found the knives and one of the handguns in his possession at the time. He spent 2½ months in Italian custody.

While in custody, he sent a text message from his cell phone to a friend to take evidence from his residence in Vicenza. He then lied to a Criminal Investigation Command officer who interviewed him in Milan about having the other handgun.

The two 9 mm guns had been confiscated near Tikrit, Iraq, in summer 2003 during operations by the 173rd Airborne Brigade, which spent almost a year in country. He shipped them back to Italy in his personal gear.

Morris pleaded not guilty to obstruction of justice and making a false official statement, but was found guilty on the two-day court-martial, which concluded Thursday.

## TELL YOUR STORY

Author seeking accounts of war and service experience for the books: **MOTHERHOOD**

—and— **PRAYERS ON THE FRONT LINE**

Send ASAP to:  
Ret. Lt. Col. Barbara Bevins  
4120 Rio Bravo, Suite 301  
El Paso, TX 79902  
dbevins@clp.rcom

## MILITARY UPDATE

Tom Philpott

# TRS is less than what it seems

Thirty years ago, Congress decided the nation could no longer afford to offer military volunteers a robust draft-era GI Bill, so it concocted VEAP, the smallest of small universal life insurance benefit of the last century.

Last year, Congress decided the nation couldn't afford to open active-duty Tricare benefits to all drilling reservists, so it created Tricare Reserve Select (TRS). Time will tell if TRS is the reserve health care equivalent of VEAP, but advocates for reservists and families fear it might be.

Certainly some reservists among the estimated 20 percent who lacked health care coverage before mobilization will see TRS as a welcome option. Many more eligibles could find it to be too expensive, too restrictive and too complex.

"I don't think many will" sign up, said Joyce Weisel Raezer, director of government relations for the National Military Family Association. "We will all know better once we see the premiums [in late March]. But a lot of people

will ask about it. A lot will get bogged down in the process and never make it through. And then some folks will sign up for it under the impression that it's the same as Tricare Prime, and be very unhappy."

When TRS begins April 26, thousands of Reserve and National Guard members previously deactivated from post-9/11 deployments, and thousands more soon to complete deployments, will gain access to a scaled-down version of Tricare Standard, the fee-for-service insurance plan.

To qualify, they must have been mobilized under contingency orders of 30 days or longer and have served at least 90 days' continuous active service. For every 90 days served, they will be eligible for a year of TRS. So a year's continuous deployment could qualify them for four years of TRS coverage, for members and their families.

Coverage comes at a cost, however. Members must make a binding agreement to remain in the Selected Reserve for the duration of TRS coverage. They also will pay

monthly premiums, with rates to be announced, that will cover 28 percent of TRS costs. The Congressional Budget Office last year estimated member-only premiums at \$50 a month and family at \$183.

TRS users also will pay the usual Tricare Standard fees, co-payments and annual deductibles. They will not be eligible for Tricare Prime, the military managed-care program, or have access to military treatment facilities or base pharmacies. They will be eligible to get discounted drugs through mail order and Tricare's network of commercial pharmacies.

TRS also won't include many "extras" of Tricare Standard, such as the Program for Persons with Disabilities, which provides financial help for families impacted by mental retardation or a serious physical disability.

Reservists must decide to enroll in TRS before leaving active duty, which likely will mean making quick decisions at demobilization sites. If they depart without a "preliminary" TRS agreement, eligibility expires.

Most deployed reservists and families are eligible for Tricare for six months after mobilization. Congress made that temporary postmobilization benefit permanent last year. TRS coverage will start after transition coverage, so on the 181st day after leaving active service.

By then, TRS applicants must have a final TRS agreement with their services, which would involve finding a Selected Reserve unit that needs the reservist for the duration of TRS coverage. If a four-year contract is sought, but the service can guarantee only two years in drill status, the TRS final agreement must be reduced to two years.

Raezer described the sign-up process as "Byzantine."

"It's 'Do this here — and this here — at this time.' All these little steps. And the personnel system has to work with the health care system or the whole thing falls apart."

To comment, write Military Update, P.O. Box 22113, Centerville, VA 20121-1113, e-mail mlupdate@aol.com or visit [www.militaryupdate.com](http://www.militaryupdate.com)

# Web site helps 'any soldier' get packages

BY LEO SHANE III

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Marty Horn understood the security concerns behind the Department of Defense's decision to stop care packages to "any soldier" being sent to Iraq and Afghanistan.

But he still wanted to help, so he has spent the last year fine-tuning a Web site that follows the restrictions and still get supplies overseas.

"I had 20 years in the Army; I'm aware of the system and the hassles with getting mail overseas," Horn said. "But people across America and the world are saying, 'We want to do something to help the troops.' I think this provides a conduit for them."

In 2001, Department of Defense officials banned anonymous care packages being sent overseas — including the popular "Any Servicemember" program touted by the likes of Ann Landers — after problems with anthrax and hoax chemical attacks in the U.S. postal system.

But Horn's site, [www.ansoldier.com](http://www.ansoldier.com), allows troops to volunteer as distributor for anonymous care packages, by asking donors to send items under the volunteers' names to "any soldier."

It connects citizens and overseas servicemembers through an online bulletin board where the military personnel can request items such as batteries, work gloves or potato chips.

The site has grown dramatically over the last year. Horn estimates nearly 46,000 overseas servicemembers have received care packages through the site over the last 12 months.

"It's not just Americans who want to support our people fighting; it's from all over the world," he said. "The people in Australia have been amazingly supportive. It's just great to see."



Courtesy to Stripes

**Marty Horn, a 20-year Army veteran and founder of [www.ansoldier.com](http://www.ansoldier.com), with his son, Army Sgt. Brian Horn. Marty and his wife figured out a system to help others get packages to servicemembers they don't know.**

Donors from England and Canada have petitioned him to launch similar sites for their countries' troops, and Horn said he hopes to coordinate with Department of Defense officials to keep his program going after troops withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Horn and his wife, Sue, launched their ef-

fort while their son, Army Sgt. Brian Horn, was deployed in 2004. Brian Horn is part of the 173rd Airborne Division, based in Vicenza, Italy.

The parents received little information of the paratrooper's war experience until they stumbled upon photos in an October 2003 edition of Stars and Stripes showing him sleeping outdoors without tents or pillows. When his parents asked how they could make him more comfortable, Brian asked them to think of his fellow soldiers, too.

The family began sending two sets of care packages, one addressed to "Brian Horn, Attn: Any Soldier" to share with his unit. As more friends and family sent gifts, Brian recruited other soldiers to act as contacts, distributing the items as they arrived.

Horn said he expected to recruit about 50 overseas contacts when he launched the site. After a year, he has more than 1,100 troops willing to act as distributors.

"They tell us how many male and female folks they'll be taking care of, what they need, and even post pictures sometimes," Horn said. "The Marines who have been deployed have been amazing, and you heard that from an Army guy."

Horn said troops stationed in other parts of the world have started to post their requests online too. Next month he'll add another Iraq contact to his list. His son is scheduled to be redeployed there, and jokes that everyone in his unit is already bothering him for care packages.

"I'm actually a little worried about the attention he'll get," Horn said. "He's become so well known because of this, he's going to need a whole train for the support packages for his unit when he returns."

For more information, go to: [www.ansoldier.com](http://www.ansoldier.com).

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## IN THE STATES

## Rice takes oath as secretary of state

By BARRY SCHWEID

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Condoleezza Rice took the oath as secretary of state — a second time — with President Bush's assurance to the world that she will lead by "character and conviction and wisdom."

Rice pledged, in response, to use diplomacy to widen the community of democracy. "You have given us our mission and we are ready to serve our great country and the cause of freedom for which it stands," she said.

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a neighbor in Washington's Watergate apartment building, administered the 137-year-old oath in the State Department's formal dining room Friday. Rice's uncle Alto Ray and two aunts, Geona Patterson and Mattie Bonds, held the Bible.

It was her second swearing-in. The first was in a private ceremony at the White House Wednesday night with White House chief of staff Andrew H. Card Jr. officiating.



Condoleezza Rice is sworn in Friday as secretary of state in Washington. From left to right are: President Bush; Genoa McPhatter, Rice's aunt; Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg; Alto Ray, Rice's uncle; and Rice.

Ginsburg praised Rice as a person of "exceptional talent."

Both Bush and Rice paid tribute in their remarks to Colin Powell, who was secretary of state in

Bush's first term. "All of us admire and appreciate the service of Colin Powell," the president said.

"Colin Powell left big shoes to

fill when he left the State Department," Bush added. "Condoleezza Rice is the person to fill them."

Bush catapulted Rice to the role of top U.S. diplomat after she served for four years as his national security adviser. "Condi's appointment and confirmation as secretary of state marks a remarkable transition in what is already a career of outstanding service and accomplishment," he said.

Calling his trusted adviser by her nickname, Condi, throughout, Bush said his own family had been "enriched by our friendship with this remarkable person."

Rice hit the ground running Thursday with a pep talk to cheering State Department employees crowded into a lobby, meetings on Iraq and the tsunami disaster and telephone conversations with seven foreign leaders as she planned a trip to Europe and the Middle East next week. Her trip next week to Europe, foreshadowed one later in February by the president, was widely expected, but not her foray to the Middle East.



Investigators examine wreckage from a train crash Thursday in Glendale, Calif. The crash, involving multiple trains, occurred after an apparently suicidal man parked his SUV in the path of a commuter train Wednesday morning and then jumped out.

## Officials sift train wreck for evidence

By PAUL CHAVEZ

The Associated Press

GLENDALE, Calif. — Investigators picked through the wreckage of two commuter trains, searching for evidence to build a murder case against the suicidal man who triggered the crash by leaving his SUV on the tracks. Eleven people died and nearly 200 were injured.

Juan Manuel Alvarez, 25, appeared in court Friday to be arraigned on murder charges, but the hearing was delayed so the suspect could undergo further medical evaluation.

After Alvarez left his car Wednesday morning and stood by as the trains derailed in a fiery chain-reaction crash, he ran to

the porch of a nearby home and used scissors to stab himself and slash his wrists, according to reports in two local newspapers.

A woman in the house called 911, and Alvarez told paramedics what happened as he was being rushed to a hospital. They radioed police, who arrested him. It had previously been unclear when Alvarez harmed himself. A 911 tape revealed the drama moments after the nation's deadliest rail crash in six years, as an employee at a nearby Costco store reported the disaster and at the same time directed other employees to fight the flames.

"There's a Metrolink that runs adjacent to the — oh, they need fire extinguishers! Quick! Quick!" she yelled to other workers.

"What's going on?" asked the dispatcher. "What's going on, ma'am?"

"The Metrolink derailed right on the side of the building!" she said.

Sixty of the injured were treated at the scene and the rest were taken to hospitals. An incomplete tally Thursday showed at least 23 people remained hospitalized, seven in critical condition, and more than 80 had been released.

Emergency workers officially ended their recovery efforts Thursday after determining there were no more survivors or bodies to be found.

Alvarez, who was under suicide watch at a hospital's jail ward, was expected to face 11 murder counts.

## Gay couple sues Calif. for license to marry

The Associated Press

SANTA ANA, Calif. — A gay couple wants a federal judge to overturn state and federal laws against same-sex marriage, arguing that those laws violate their civil rights and are equivalent to racial segregation. Calling gays "the most oppressed minority since slavery," the couple's attorney Richard C. Gilbert on Thursday told U.S. District Judge Gary Taylor "it now falls to you to uphold the principles of liberty."

The case is one of the few challenges to bans on same-sex marriage pending in federal court. Most litigation on the issue is in the state court system, where advocates believe they have a better chance of success.

The five-hour hearing focused on such basic questions as the purpose of marriage, the definition of discrimination and whether a federal court should get involved in an issue that is the subject of active litigation in state court.

Taylor, after detailed questioning of all sides in the suit filed by Christopher Hammer and Arthur Smelt of Mission Viejo, said he would not issue an immediate ruling but would take some time to consider the arguments.

California recognizes only marriages between a man and a woman.

Hammer and Smelt, both 45, had a private commitment ceremony in 1997 and applied for a marriage license from Orange County last year.

## Officers arrested

CHICAGO — Four veteran police officers conspired with drug dealers to steal money, drugs and guns from competing dealers, authorities said in announcing nine arrests.

Other officers who were part of the conspiracy, authorities said Thursday.

"If I were the other officers, I would be picking up the phone and calling us because we intend to get to the bottom of it," U.S. Attorney Patrick J. Fitzgerald said, suggesting that any officers with guilty knowledge could help themselves by becoming witnesses.

The four officers have been suspended without pay and the department would immediately start proceedings to fire them. Police Superintendent Philip J. Cline said.

## Napalm, mines seized

DENTON, Texas — Hand grenades, tear gas, napalm and mines are among items in an arsenal confiscated from a hospital worker's home.

Todd remained jailed Friday in lieu of \$200,000 bond on charges of aggravated assault and assault on a peace officer.

Police said the 51-year-old employee of Baylor University Medical Center at Dallas was accused of shooting a construction worker who was in a portable toilet at a construction site across the street, then attacking a law officer during a later investigation.

Napalm and silencers also were seized Thursday morning.

## Controversial professor

BOULDER, Colo. — A University of Colorado professor who compared the victims of the World Trade Center attacks to Nazis said he would not back down from the topic in a speech in central New York next month.

Two Colorado congressmen on Thursday said professor Ward Churchill should apologize for his comments, while the brother of a man who died at the World Trade Center called Churchill a "nut case."

Churchill, chairman of the ethnic studies program at CU, has been invited to give the keynote at Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y.

In "Some People Push Back," a treatise he wrote shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, Churchill said the 3,000 people killed in the twin towers weren't innocent victims. He said they worked for "the mighty engine of profit" but chose to ignore their role.

## New same-sex policy

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — The nation's largest employer is expanding the definition of "immediate family" in its ethics policy to include an employee's same-sex partner.

The Wal-Mart Stores Inc. policy change was disclosed last week with the Securities and Exchange Commission on Wednesday — accounts for the laws in some states that restrict domestic partnerships and civil unions, officials said.

Company spokesman Gus Whitcomb said Thursday he declined to say if the change would affect employee benefits.

From The Associated Press

# Bush plan would narrow investments

## Advisers finalizing proposal for alternative to Social Security

BY LAURA MECKLER  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush's advisers have settled on a proposal for structuring the personal accounts they hope to create in Social Security, while on Capitol Hill, Senate Democrats were launching an effort to defeat the plan altogether.

Under a plan recommended to Bush, the private accounts would resemble many company-sponsored retirement plans, with just a handful of investment options.

By default, workers would be enrolled in a "life cycle" account, in which investments become more conservative as investors age, if they do not choose one of

the other options, according to two officials speaking on condition of anonymity.

On Friday, Senate Democrats were holding a session aimed at showcasing the problems with Bush's overall plan to let workers divert a portion of their Social Security taxes into individual accounts that could be invested in the stock market.

Bush met last week with his Social Security advisers working to write a legislative plan. They briefed him on how they had solved among themselves as well as options in areas where there was no consensus.

Yet to be decided are several big questions, including how large the private accounts should

be, how much guaranteed benefits would be cut and how to pay as much as \$2 trillion needed in the first 10 years to effect the transition to a new system.

In devising a structure for the private accounts, the Bush administration is modeling its proposal after the Thrift Savings Plan, a tax-deferred retirement investment plan similar to a 401(k). The idea is to minimize risk for people at the outset by offering as few as three to five diversified investment funds.

Bush said in December that his plan would make sure people could not invest "in a frivolous fashion."

Under the Thrift Savings Plan, federal workers have five invest-

ment options, including government and corporate bond funds, a stock fund that tracks the S&P 500, an international fund and other stock funds.

Under the emerging Bush plan for Social Security, the default investment would be a "life cycle" account. It would begin with investments that have greater potential for both risk and reward and shift to safer bonds as a worker's age, officials in and outside the administration said.

The government would be responsible for keeping track of how much money is in each worker's account and give the lump sums to a financial services company to invest, a mechanism aimed at keeping administrative fees low, they said.

# Jobs up in smoke for some who light up

BY DANIEL COSTELLO  
Los Angeles Times

Employers have recently tried every carrot they can think of — including cash incentives and bonuses — to convince employees to quit smoking. Now they are the trying the stick.

Pointing to rising health costs, and the oversized proportion of insurance claims attributed to smokers, employers around the United States are refusing to hire applicants who smoke and, sometimes, firing employees who refuse to quit.

"Employers are realizing the majority of health costs are spent on a small minority of workers," says Bill Whitmer, chief executive of the Health Enhancement Research Organization, an employer and health-care coalition in Birmingham, Ala.

Federal and state laws bar employers from not hiring or firing workers based on their race, religion or gender. Some states have enacted laws offering similar protections for smokers. But experts say workers in nearly half the states have few legal options if employers decided to prohibit them from smoking outside the workplace.

Employees in many states "work at the discretion of their employers and can be terminated for almost any reason as long as it's not illegal," says Stephen Sugarman, a law professor at the University of California, Berkeley.

Last fall, Union Pacific Corp., an Omaha, Neb.-based transportation company, stopped hiring smokers in seven states. Company officials said the move was made to help quell em-

ployee health costs, which have jumped more than 10 percent each of the last three years. Weyco Inc., an employee benefits company with 200 employees in Okemos, Mich., began random drug tests for nicotine on Jan. 1, saying it would fire workers who failed the test or

*"It sounds right for employers to say 'if we get rid of them, we'll save money.' But no one has the concrete data to prove that right now."*

Tom Morrison

Senior vice president, Segal Co.

refused to quit smoking. (Four Weyco employees resigned rather than take the test, says the company's president, Howard Weyers.) The Riverside County (Calif.) Sheriff's Department plans soon to require applicants for deputy sheriff positions to sign a no-smoking agreement.

In most cases, employers are asking workers to report their smoking habits voluntarily or adding disclaimers such as "nonsmokers only" to job postings. Others are requiring workers to take Breathalyzer tests that can catch traces of

carbon monoxide in their lungs or submit to urine tests to detect nicotine.

Employees' rights groups and some unions are decrying the smoking bans as an invasion of individual rights. "What you do in your own home after work or on the weekend is one of your best business," says Lewis Maltby, president of the National Workrights Institute in Princeton, N.J. "The last time I checked, tobacco is a legal product."

Maltby says his organization is trying to persuade some states to pass broader worker-protection laws.

Critics of the smoking bans say it's not clear that smokers are spurs costly health care costs, such as people who are obese. While some studies have shown that smokers have higher absenteeism and lower productivity rates than non-smokers, economists who study the issue say the research is limited. It's possible, they say, that smokers don't dramatically increase health costs with chronic and expensive conditions such as emphysema, heart disease and cancer until they're much older, when they're often employed elsewhere or retired.

"It sounds right for employers to say 'if we get rid of them, we'll save money.' But no one has the concrete data to prove that right now," says Tom Morrison, senior vice president of Segal Co., an employee benefits consulting firm in New York.

Although smoking rates continue to fall across the United States — an estimated 23 percent of adults smoke today, down from 37 percent in 1970 — employers say they need to find new ways to reign in health costs.

## Dad charged in stabbing

HIGHLAND FALLS, N.Y. — A father was charged with murder hours after his 7-year-old daughter was found stabbed to death in the boys' restroom at her small parochial school.

The motive was unclear, and no weapon has been found, police Chief Peter Miller said.

Christopher Rhodes, 27, denied guilt, police said.

The body of first-grader Jerica Rhodes was discovered not long after classes started Thursday at Sacred Heart of Jesus School in this Hudson Valley village. Miller said Rhodes was arrested after that night and was being held without bail, Miller said.

## Lawyers seek appeal

HARTFORD, Conn. — Defense lawyers prepared for a possible last stand to stop Connecticut's execution of a serial killer.

Michael Ross, with arguments set before a federal appeals court and U.S. to take the issue again to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Connecticut Department of Correction was planning to put Ross to death by lethal injection at 2:01 a.m. Saturday, barring any last-minute legal rulings. It would be New England's first execution in 45 years.

The U.S. Supreme Court on Thursday dealt a heavy blow against the execution, ruling that the justices voted 5-4 to lift a stay of execution for Ross, who is on death row for the murders of four young women and girls in eastern Connecticut in the early 1980s. He has also admitted killing four other young women in Connecticut and New York.

## Subway chief misspoke

NEW YORK — New York City Transit's president apologized for upsetting commuters when he said it would take up to five years to restore full service on two subway lines damaged by fire — an estimate he later drastically lowered.

"I must have misspoke or didn't clarify myself very well on that," Lawrence Reuter said Thursday at a Metropolitan Transportation Authority board meeting. "I'm sorry."

Officials now believe it will take between one to two years to completely restore service on the A and C subway lines. The lines were impaired by a fire Sunday that destroyed a signal room at the Chambers Street station in lower Manhattan.

## P&G buys Gillette

NEW YORK — Procter & Gamble Co., the leading U.S. maker of household products whose brands include Crest, Pampers, and Gillette, has agreed to buy the razor and battery maker Gillette Co. for \$57 billion in a deal that will create the world's biggest consumer-products enterprise, the companies announced Friday.

The merger, which must still be approved by regulators and shareholders, would create a company with revenues of more than \$60 billion that would have even greater clout against mass-market retailers like Wal-Mart Stores Inc., which have been pressuring consumer product suppliers to keep costs low.

From wire services

# Judge in Jackson trial mulling public testimony for boy

BY ROBERT JABLON  
The Associated Press

SANTA MARIA, Calif. — With jury selection set to begin Monday, the judge in Michael Jackson's child-molestation case is still considering whether the entertainer's accuser should testify in public and whether jurors should see a British documentary about the pop star.

Superior Court Judge Rodney Melville scheduled a pretrial hearing for Friday to address those and other questions related to witnesses and evidence.

Jackson, 46, has pleaded not guilty to charges of molesting a 13-year-old boy and plying him with alcohol.

Jury selection could last as long as a month, with the judge and attorneys for both sides expected to screen as many as 750 prospective

jurors.

Prosecutors want to close the courtroom to the media and public when the boy, now 15, and his 14-year-old brother testify.

Reporters would be allowed to hear the voices through an audio feed.

Jackson's accuser already has been seen in the documentary, which aired on ABC-TV in 2003 and contains footage of the two holding hands and Jackson defending his practice of sleeping in the same bed with the boy.

Prosecutors want the jury to see the documentary.

Defense lawyers object, denouncing it as

"heavily edited in the most sensational fashion possible."

Prosecutors have also subpoenaed Martin Bashir to testify about the making of the documentary, titled "Living With Michael Jackson." Bashir, who now works for ABC News, is fighting the subpoena, arguing that under both California law and the U.S. Constitution, he cannot be forced to testify.

A coalition of media covering the high-profile case, including The Associated Press, is arguing that the boys' testimony should not be closed.

"A cloud of doubt will hang over any verdict" unless the public gets to see them as well, argued attorney Theodore Boutsous.

"The ability to object does not merely to listen or read, testimony is a fundamental aspect of the public's First Amendment right to attend a criminal trial," Boutsous wrote in a brief.



Jackson

# Without guidelines, justice moves slower

## Courts, judges backed up after high court strikes down standardized sentence rules

BY HOPE YEN  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Thousands of criminals are filing for reduced sentences. Backlogged courts are asking lawyers to slow down their appeals. Judges say they're confused about what to do.

Two weeks after the Supreme Court threw out mandatory sentencing guidelines, federal courts are just beginning to grapple with the consequences. And judges say it may take months, if not years, to sort through thousands of appeals and piece together a new sentencing system.

"It's a much more stressful exercise now," said U.S. District Judge Harold Baer of New York, who sentences dozens of white-collar criminals and drug offenders each month. "We're all desperately trying to follow the Supreme Court decision. But what does that mean?"

Congress enacted the federal guidelines two decades ago to ensure justice would be meted out more equally around the country.

In place since 1987, the guidelines give judges a range of possible punishments for

a given crime and make it difficult for judges to go outside those boundaries. Many states have adopted similar systems for their local courts.

In the Jan. 12 ruling, the Supreme Court said making the guidelines mandatory violated a defendant's Sixth Amendment right to a jury trial because they call for judges to make factual decisions that affect prison time, such as the amount of drugs involved in a crime.

Under the ruling, the guidelines now are only advisory; as a result, federal judges are free to sentence convicted criminals as they see fit, but they may be subject to reversal if appeals courts find them "unreasonable."

The burden of defining that legal standard will fall on the nation's 13 federal appeals courts, which received 400 new cases Monday after the Supreme Court ordered them to reconsider defendants' sentences for crimes ranging from securities fraud to theft and drug possession.

Those 400 cases are petitions from defendants who wanted their sentences reviewed after justices struck down a similar

### Federal sentencing guidelines

Federal sentencing guidelines took effect Nov. 1, 1987, the result of a law passed three years earlier to promote fairness by ensuring that similar offenders who commit similar crimes receive similar sentences, regardless of where they are tried.

The guidelines are administered by the U.S. Sentencing Commission, a seven-member judicial agency whose members are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. The guidelines are typically updated yearly, with revisions subject to reversal by Congress.

The 1,800-page manual previously re-

quired judges to boost prison sentences based on factors that had not come before the jury during trial, such as the amount of drugs involved in a crime or the amount of money involved in fraud. Deviations from the guidelines were allowed only in unusual circumstances.

After the Supreme Court's Jan. 12 ruling, the guidelines are now advisory rather than mandatory. As a result, judges no longer have to determine specific sentencing factors, such as whether a robber had shot a gun. Instead they have the discretion to mete out punishment as they see fit based on all the factors.

From The Associated Press

sentencing guidelines plan in Washington state last June, putting the federal guidelines in doubt. Hundreds of other appeals are pending at the appeals court level.

The appeals courts already are feeling the heat. At least two, the 9th Circuit in San Francisco and the 2nd Circuit in New York, are asking defense attorneys to hold off on filing some sentencing appeals for now.

Court officials cited an already congested docket in asking defendants to wait until the appeals court judges can offer some guidance on the definition of "reasonable" sentences in a few test cases in coming weeks.

Many judges are sticking close to the guidelines, but some judges who had long chafed under the mandatory system are showing some leniency for first-time offenders.

Last week in Maine, for instance, U.S. District Judge D. Brock Hornby declined to sentence first-time offender Steven Jones to 12 to 18 months under the guidelines for illegal gun possession.

Instead, he ordered a house arrest and treatment because of Jones' history of depression.

But in Utah, U.S. District Judge Paul Cassell chose to sentence a bank robber to 188 months, the same amount of time prescribed by the guidelines.

A huge mountain of cow manure smolders at a feedlot near Milford, Neb., on Jan. 18. The 2,000-ton pile of burning cow manure caught fire about two months ago and continues to smolder despite attempts to douse it.



## Neb. manure fire burns into 3rd month

BY KEVIN O'HANLON  
The Associated Press

MILFORD, Neb. — Urban dwellers who enjoy dining on filet mignon at five-star restaurants would probably just as soon not know about David Dickinson's dilemma.

But Dickinson, who makes his living in the cattle business, has an environmental problem on his hands that is vexing state officials: a 2,000-ton pile of burning cow manure.

Dickinson owns and manages Midwest Feeding Co. about 20 miles west of Lincoln, which takes in as many as 12,000 cows at a time from farmers and ranchers and fattens them for market.

Byproducts from the massive operation resulted in a dung pile measuring 100 feet long, 30 feet high and 50 feet wide that began burning about two months ago

and continues to smolder despite Herculean attempts to douse it.

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality has informed Dickinson that his smoldering dung pile violates clean-air laws and is working with him to find the best solution to extinguish it, said agency spokesman Rich Webster.

Simply dumping water on the heap is not the answer, Webster said, because of concerns about runoff to any nearby water source.

Dickinson first tried using heavy equipment to spread out the smoldering pile and extinguish the fire.

"But the problem was, it started in another spot," he said.

"We've also had the fire department out a couple of times."

And still it burns.

No one is sure how the fire started, but a common theory is that heat from the decomposing ma-

nure deep inside the pile eventually ignited the manure.

Wilma Roth, who manages a restaurant along Interstate 80 about a mile north of the feedlot, said her customers have complained about the smoke, which wafts for miles.

"I'd just as soon forget about it," she said.

Dickinson said the smoke is not particularly malodorous although that comes from a man who works full-time around manure.

"I guess it's just all perspective," he said. "To me, it just smells like smoke. I really don't know how to describe it."

"It's a nuisance, and obviously we are trying to get it resolved," he said. "Everybody's been really patient."

## Digitized prints risk fingering the innocent

BY FLYNN MCROBERTS  
AND STEVE MILLS

Chicago Tribune

CLARKSBURG, W.Va. — Deep inside a sprawling complex tucked in the hills of this Appalachian town, a room full of supercomputers attempts to sift America's guilty from its innocent.

This is where the FBI keeps its database of fingerprints, allowing examiners to conduct criminal checks from computer screens in fewer than 30 minutes — something that previously took them weeks as they rummaged through 2,100 file cabinets stuffed with inked print cards.

But the same digital technology that has allowed the FBI to dramatically speed such checks over the last few years has created the risk of accusing people who are innocent, the Chicago Tribune has found.

Across the country, police departments and crime labs are submitting fingerprints for comparisons and for entry into databases, using digitized images that may be missing crucial details or may have been manipulated without the FBI knowing it.

Not unlike a picture from your typical digital camera, a digitized fingerprint provides less complete detail than a traditional photographic image. That matters little with pictures from the family vacation. But when the digital image is of a fingerprint, the lack of precision raises the specter of

false identifications in criminal cases.

"There's a risk that not only would they exclude someone incorrectly — we have the potential to identify someone incorrectly," said David Grieve, a fingerprint expert who is the state police training coordinator for the Illinois State Police crime lab system.

An FBI-sponsored group of fingerprint examiners was concerned enough about the quality of digital images that in 2001 it recommended doubling their resolution. Three years later, though, the vast majority of police agencies still use equipment with lower resolution.

David Grieve, fingerprint expert

"... We have the potential to identify someone incorrectly."

some, the most commonly used image-enhancement software, Adobe Photoshop, leaves no record of some of the changes police technicians can perform as they clean up fingerprint images.

FBI officials recognize the resolution problem, but say it leads to overlooking guilty individuals, not falsely accusing the innocent.

"The risk that we're hearing is that we miss people — because the resolution is not enough — not that we're identifying people incorrectly," said Jerry Pender, deputy assistant director at the FBI's Clarksville facility.

Defenders of the technology contend that concerns about it are overstated because computers only spit out a list of potential matches. Typically, human fingerprint examiners make the final matches introduced in court.



# IN THE WORLD

## Molson-Coors merger

**MONTREAL** — Shareholders of North America's oldest beer company, Canada's Molson Inc., on Friday voted overwhelmingly in favor of merging with Adolph Coors, the third-largest brewery in the United States, all but sealing the alliance when Coors shareholders vote next week.

The combined Molson Coors Brewing Co., with headquarters both in Montreal and Denver, would own brands that include Coors Original, Coors Light, Keystone, Molson Canadian and Carling.

Molson officials said that more than 80 percent of the shareholders agreed to the merger, whose chances improved earlier this month after the brewers dramatically increased a special dividend to persuade wavering Molson shareholders to approve their deal.

## Darfur bombardment

**CAIRO, Egypt** — A Sudanese air force bombardment of villages in Darfur this week killed or wounded almost 100 people, a U.N. spokesman said Friday, calling the bombing a major violation of a fragile ceasefire in the conflict-ridden region.

The bombardment at the village of Shangli Tobaya, which took place Wednesday, forced "thousands" of people to flee, spokeswoman Radhia Achouri said in a phone interview from Khartoum.

Achouri said African Union observers at the scene had reported "almost 100 casualties" but did not specify how many were dead and how many wounded.

## Meteor lands in Spain

**MADRID, Spain** — A spectacular fireball meteor was seen falling in the neighborhood of two Madrid airports, emergency services said Friday.

"We had three calls and are aware of other calls reporting a huge fireball before midnight on Thursday," said Luis Contreras, the emergency telephone service in Madrid.

Spanish press agency EFE also received calls reporting the falling object, which was seen descending nearly vertically near the airports.

## Bridge stays closed

**ATHENS, Greece** — Greece's largest bridge remained closed Friday, a day after a support cable caught fire and snapped, slowing traffic between the port of Patras and the country's mainland.

Authorities have not said why the cable broke or how long the 7,382-foot suspension bridge will remain closed.

France's Vinci SA, the world's largest builder, led a consortium which built the bridge. It opened on the eve of the Athens Olympics last August after the construction schedule was speeded up.

From The Associated Press

# Eager to take on anti-Semitism

BY CONSTANT BRAND

The Associated Press

**LUXEMBOURG** — One day after Europe-wide Holocaust commemorations, EU ministers said Friday they want to improve cooperation in the fight against extremism and anti-Semitism across the continent, including a ban on Nazi symbols.

Luxembourg justice minister Luc Frieden, who chaired the meeting of justice and interior ministers, called for the 25 EU governments to quickly adopt proposals which have been on the table for two years.

"Discussions have been going on too long," Frieden said. "We owe it also to the victims of Auschwitz and other concentration camps. Racism is something that is incompatible with the fundamental values that are the basis of the European construction."

The proposals, which could include a ban on Nazi symbols, most notably the public manifestation of the swastika, would meet agreement from all EU governments.

The ban was unlikely to go as far as including the use of Nazi uniforms in movies for example, officials said.

Thursday's commemorations marking the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz Nazi concentration camp high-

## Cheney tours Auschwitz

The Associated Press

**OSWIECIM, Poland** — U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney toured a Nazi concentration camp here Friday, walking through brick barracks, viewing models of human hair and walking under a cynical sign at the main gate that reads: "Arbeit macht frei," which means "Work brings freedom."

Cheney had toured Auschwitz once before — back in 1975 when he was chief of staff for President Gerald Ford. On Friday he spent about 90 minutes in freezing temperatures walking around the snow-covered camp.

He signed a condolence book at one of the first crematoriums where 400 people, mostly Jews, were gassed at a time and their bodies cremated.

The tour wrapped up a three-day visit to southern Poland where the vice president joined scores of world leaders to mark the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz and Birkenau concentration camps.



Cheney

lighted the growing problem of xenophobia and anti-Semitism in Europe.

Also, pictures showing Britain's Prince Harry wearing a Nazi swastika armband at a costume party earlier this month added to EU calls to ban all Nazi symbols across Europe.

Reflecting the sensitivity of the issue at home, British Home Secretary Charles Clarke refused to comment on the issue, but endorsed calls for cooperation.

Italy has been blocking a deal on the standards that would define what racism is and set out common aims to tackle it.

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's conservative government includes the right-wing National Alliance, which fears its neo-fascist roots could bring it in violation of the new EU rules, if adopted.

The party's leader, Foreign Minister Gianfranco Fini, has been trying to rid his party of extremists.

Britain too has problems with the proposal, fearing it could impede on individual rights of expression.

"The question is always where are the limitations of the freedom of expression and that is the balance we have to find," Frieden said.

"We have an interest to be tough against the extreme right, it would make sense to coordinate that on European level," said Guenther Beckstein, Bavarian interior minister, who was representing Germany at the informal meeting of EU ministers.

Also at the meeting, EU ministers looked at ways to coordinate their fight against organized crime and terrorist groups by sharing data on criminal records.

EU Justice and Home Affairs Commissioner Franco Frattini suggested ministers move to launch a pilot project in sharing information on convicted rapists, ensuring they do not move freely across the union without authorities knowing where they are.

The EU ministers also discussed a request from Interpol Chief Ronald Noble that the 25-nation bloc provide more aid in identifying victims of the Asian tsunami.

Frieden said Interpol requested the EU give some \$2.6 million to help fund setting up an international database for DNA samples taken from victims.

# Father reunites with son separated in tsunami

BY IRWAN FIRDAUS

The Associated Press

**BANDA ACEH, Indonesia** — For more than a month, Muhammad Jamil toured refugee camps and morgues in this tsunami-ravaged city looking for three of his children missing since the waves struck.

On Friday, he found his son — but there was still no news of his two daughters. "I was always convinced he was still alive," said Jamil, after hugging 11-year-old Habibi, who was in the shower when his father arrived. "God was listening to the prayers I have been saying day and night."

The reunion — a rare piece of good news in this province where tens of thousands of parents have lost children to the waves — was organized by international aid group Save the Children, which has been tracing the relatives of lost kids.

Jamil, a 52-year-old cocoa farmer, was checking on his crops when the tsunami struck. Habibi was supposed to be staying

with Jamil's eldest daughter, but had gone to play at a friend's house in the center of this provincial capital, where almost 40,000 people were killed.

Jamil's happiness was tempered by the knowledge that two of his daughters, ages 9 and 23, were still missing — and most likely dead. They had been at the 23-year-old daughter's house, which the waves washed away. His four other children were unharmed.

"I still long for my daughters, but at least I have Habibi now," said Jamil, whose wife died several years ago. He now lives at a refugee camp.

Save the Children, based in Westport, Conn., and other organizations are registering lost children in Indonesia and other tsunami-struck countries to reunite them with family members. The group has so far listed 72 children who have been separated from their parents or are being looked after by other relatives.

Save the Children stopped using pictures and offering extensive information on lost kids, fearful that child smugglers might use

the details to claim the youngsters as their own. Instead, it issues lists solely consisting of names and posts them in public places.

After the tsunami, Habibi was taken in by a family living close to his friend's house. Save the Children learned of his whereabouts from people living in a nearby refugee camp.

Jamil spent the last month visiting countless refugee camps and hospitals. He said he checked the corpses of hundreds of children littering the streets in the days after the disaster.

On Wednesday, Jamil discovered his son's name on a list at the Save the Children office in Banda Aceh.

Workers at the charity then showed Habibi pictures of five different men.

"I pointed straight to my father's picture," he said.

Habibi, his hair still wet from his shower, smiled shyly as he met his father.

"I am happy to meet my dad," he said. "I want to stay with my father in the refugee camp, but I still want to be able to come here and play around with my friends."

# Schroeder urges diplomacy over Iran's nuclear effort

The Associated Press

**DAVOS, Switzerland** — German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder urged diplomacy in the stand-off with Iran over nuclear enrichment and Israel's Shimon Peres said Middle East peace talks could end a "new age," as they addressed the World Economic Forum on Friday.

Speaking to hundreds of people

at the annual meeting of top business executives and politicians, Schroeder — who steadfastly opposed the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq — said that it was imperative Iran not develop nuclear weapons.

"This is a hotbed region already," he said.

"The last thing we need is another military conflict."

The United States and several

other countries fear Iran is seeking to enrich uranium not to the low level needed to generate power but to weapons grade that forms the core of nuclear warheads.

Iran publicly insists it only seeks to make low-grade, enriched uranium for nuclear fuel.

"We are most decidedly in favor of the fact that Iran completely gives up use of military

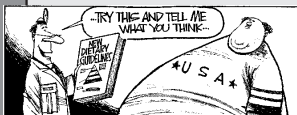
power forever, if at all possible, but this is a target that has to be achieved through diplomatic means," Schroeder said to applause.

Together with France and Britain, Germany has spearheaded diplomatic efforts to persuade Tehran to end nuclear activities that could be used to make weapons — an aim that Iranian leaders Washington has been less patient.



# Looking at the news

A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons



DICK LOCHER/Tribune Media Services

JOHNNY'S GUESTS TONIGHT ARE... WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, MARK TWAIN, WILL ROGERS, MAE WEST, JIMMY STEWART AND ELVIS... AND NOW... --HEEEERE'S--



CHARLIE DANIEL/Scripts Howard

...IF JOB PERFORMANCE REVIEWS WERE LIKE CONDI RICE'S SENATE CONFIRMATION HEARING...



WALT HANDELSMAN/Tribune Media Services



GLENN MCCOY/Universal Press Syndicate

## 'Old School' party

**NC** DURHAM — In what police say was an homage to the movie "Old School," partying Duke University students were found in a fraternity house basement with an inflatable pool, a whole lot of baby oil and women in bikinis.

Police came upon the scene early Sunday after responding to a noise complaint.

Officers said they cleared the house of the 200 revelers, sending some of the women home in the subfreezing temperatures in nothing more than the bikinis they wore.

## Dorm fire remembered

**NJ** SOUTH ORANGE — Relatives of people killed in a Seton Hall dormitory fire in 2000 gathered to gather on campus Wednesday to mark the fifth anniversary of the blaze that left three freshmen dead. Two students were indicted in June 2003 on murder and arson charges and are free on bail pending trial. They have maintained their innocence.

## Prairie dog not a pest

**SD** PIERRE — A legislative committee killed a bill to designate the black-tailed prairie dog as a state pest after game officials said the measure could wreck their efforts to control the critters. The legislation could lead environmental groups to renew efforts to have the animal designated as endangered, officials said. That could interfere with ongoing state programs.

## Poor park programs

**CA** FRESNO — Thousands of California students are turned away from national park education programs each year because of insufficient funding and staff reductions, according to a study.

The report released Wednesday by the National Parks Conservation Association examined education programs at 11 of California's 24 national parks. It found that more than 80,000 students in kindergarten through 12th grade participate in the programs each year, or 1 percent of the state's 7 million public and private school students.

"Part of providing a high-quality education to our children is ensuring access to the unique learning opportunities in our national parks," said Deborah DeMeo, the association's California desert field representative.

## Drug testing for officials

**NM** SANTA FE — A lawmaker wants New Mexico to require yearly random drug testing of all its elected officials, from school board members to U.S. senators, with results posted on the Internet.

"I think we need to remember that we are public servants," Republican state Sen. Steve Komadina said Tuesday.

His bill was prompted by last year's drug-related arrests of a



## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

prominent New Mexico judge and a public utilities commissioner.

Tim Storey, a senior fellow at the National Conference of State Legislatures, said he knew of no other state that requires such testing.

## Poisoning of family

**WI** PORTAGE — A teenager put mouse poison into his family's food for five weeks before his stepfather discovered the pellets in some coffee grounds, according to a criminal complaint.

The 15-year-old was charged with three counts of attempted first-degree intentional homicide. A judge set bail at \$25,000 cash Wednesday.

When interviewed by police at school, the teen said he put poison in juice, milk, spaghetti, coffee and meat, according to the complaint. The boy told investigators that he did not want to kill his family, but wanted to make them sick because he was mad at them.

## Walls must come down

**VT** JERICHO — A judge has ordered a Jericho man to tear down a house to restore a natural bird habitat in a wetland.

Larry Westall built the three-story, 30-foot-high house a



## Hooded horse

Yep is dressed for the weather as she enjoys a bite of hay near Fairfield, Fla. The 3-year-old, whose formal name is Yep-Sho-Nut-Wil, seems to enjoy the cold weather that she woke up to on the Jenkin Just Right Thoroughbreds farm.

decade ago off Browns Trace Road in wetlands deemed important for migratory birds. Superior Court Judge Richard Norton recently upheld a state order that the house come down by June 1 because it doesn't comply with state wetland rules.

State officials were unaware of any previous case of a house being built in a Vermont wetland. In this case, the Class II wetland has a 50-foot protective buffer because it is considered significant.

The house has not been occupied because of problems Westall encountered in obtaining permits, officials said.

## Shooting out windows

**LA** GRETNA — Six teenagers were accused of shooting out the windows of at least 242 vehicles in the New Orleans area, leaving behind at least \$100,000 in damage. They fired pellet guns while riding in a pickup truck, according to police. Authorities said the teens were arrested after a home surveillance camera caught them in action.

## Roosters in the ring?

**OK** OKLAHOMA CITY — With cockfighting now banned in Oklahoma, one legislator is proposing a blood-free alternative: fitting roosters with little boxing gloves and letting them slug it out.

"Who's going to object to chickens fighting like humans do? Everybody wins," said Democratic state Sen. Frank Shurden, a protector of the gamefowl industry and a long-time defender of cockfighting, in which birds are fitted with razor-like spurs and often battle to the death.

Oklahoma voters banned cockfighting in 2002. The practice is still legal in Louisiana and New Mexico.

## Life for serial rapists

**MT** HELENA — The Montana Supreme Court upheld a law requiring serial rapists to spend the rest of their lives in prison. The court said the law isn't unconstitutional because it's based on protecting society and discouraging repeated offenses. The decision upheld Charles Webb's life sentence for raping a woman in 2002, four months after he was released from prison for a 1995 rape.

## Smokers: You're fired

**MI** LANSING — Four employees of a health care company have been fired for refusing to take a test to determine whether they smoke cigarettes.

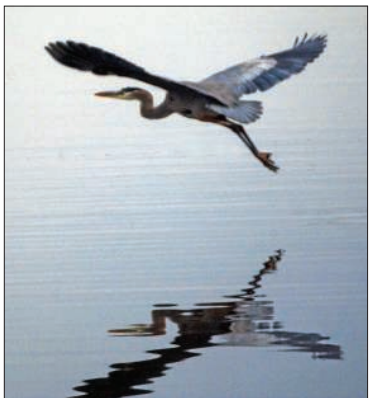
Weyco Inc., a health benefits administrator based in Okemos, Mich., adopted a policy Jan. 1 that allows employees to be fired if they smoke, even if the smoking happens after business hours or at home.

Company founder Howard Weyers has said the anti-smoking rule was designed to shield the firm from high health care costs. "I don't want to pay for the results of smoking," he said.



Watch out!

Richard Zalewski clears snow from his porch roof in Syracuse, N.Y.



Taking to the air  
in Beaufort, N.C.

A great grey heron flies off after snacking on fish along Taylors Creek





## The braiding bunch

Diana Boyles, 6, center, reacts to an educational video as she braids the hair of Sydney Hodges, 8, right, as her own hair is braided by Aubrey Scott, 7, left, at Valley Christian Academy in Roswell, N.M.



## Cleaning up is fun

A cleanup by the Almaraz family across from their home in Kansas City, Kan., netted old tires and several bags of trash. From left, Michael, 12; Bethany, 7; and Stephen, 6, chased one of the tires as they took it to the trash pile.



## Trying to stay dry

Raymundo Frias took cover beneath his umbrella as he made his way through San Jacinto Plaza in El Paso, Texas.



## In the hot seat

Firefighters from five area fire departments responded to the blaze at the Old Hickory Furniture Company in Martinsville, Ind., where fire crews were handicapped in spraying water on the east side of the building because of high voltage lines.

## Forced retirement

**MD** BALTIMORE — The Police Department is forcing 160 injured officers to retire after doctors determined they will never be fit for full duty. It's intended as a money-saving move that will allow the hiring of more patrol officers. The police union argues the department is casting off valuable employees.

## Proof of citizenship

**AZ** PHOENIX — Arizona has become the first state to require proof of citizenship when registering to vote, a measure that supporters say is intended to prevent voter fraud.

The law went into effect Tuesday after being approved by voters in November. It requires that people provide proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate, when registering to vote and show specified forms of identification when casting a ballot at a polling place.

A civil-rights group and Democratic legislators recently had urged the Department of Justice to reject the law. They argued the changes will erect barriers that will hinder minorities' participation in elections.

## Proposed living wage

**DC** WASHINGTON — Public contractors would be required to pay their employees a "living wage" under a proposal introduced in the City Council. Member David Catania wants the rate to be at least \$10.50 an hour. Contracts under \$50,000 and contractors with fewer than 10 employees would be exempt.

## Erosion in Great Lakes

**MI** TRAVERSE CITY — Lake Huron and Lake Michigan are losing vast amounts of water because of erosion from a decades-old dredging project, according to a new study.

The lakes, connected geologically, saw levels drop when a commercial navigation channel was dug at the bottom of the St. Clair River in 1962, boosting the flow south toward Lake Erie.

According to the report, riverbed erosion has contributed to a decline of 8 to 13 inches in the Huron-Michigan water level.

Several environmental organizations said the report illustrates the unintended consequences of dredging, sand mining, shoreline alteration.

## Meth-use rate soaring

**SD** PIERRE — Healthcare advocates told legislators that methamphetamine use has skyrocketed in South Dakota. About 69 state residents per 100,000 were admitted for meth treatment in 2002, up from four per 100,000 a decade earlier, said Karen Larson, deputy director of the Community Healthcare Association of the Dakotas.

## Outdoor smoking ban

**CA** SAN FRANCISCO — City officials voted Tuesday to ban smoking in all parks, public squares and many other outdoor

spaces owned by the city.

In an 8-3 vote, the Board of Supervisors agreed that the health and environmental risks associated with discarded cigarette butts and secondhand smoke merited bans for outdoor spaces.

Violators could be fined up to \$100 on first offense, \$200 for a second violation and \$500 for each additional violation.

## Treatment for gamblers

**LA** BATON ROUGE — District attorneys from six parishes have signed on to a new program that puts those who commit nonviolent crimes because of a gambling addiction into treatment instead of prison. The program is funded through the Department of Health and Hospitals' Office for Addictive Disorders, Compulsions and Problem Gambling Fund, which receives revenue from the gambling industry.

## Tax glitch fixed

**MA** BOSTON — Early birds trying to file their tax returns electronically by phone found themselves asked to pay double their taxes for double their salary. The computer problem was fixed, state officials said, and the system is up and running again.

## Bad online scores

**CO** DENVER — Students from kindergarten to 12th grade who take online courses in Colorado are performing worse than statewide averages, according to a state report.

Online students were forced to repeat grades four times more often than the statewide average last year, and a higher percentage were rated "unsatisfactory" on standardized math tests, according to Colorado Department of Education figures.

Online school operators defended their programs, saying they draw a high number of students who failed in traditional schools.

## Restoration approved

**HI** LIHUE — The Kauai Planning Commission approved a \$200 million restoration of the famed Coco Palms Resort. Developer Richard Weiser said he plans to restore the hotel, closed since 1992, to the look it had in the 1950s and 1960s. The resort was used as a set in the 1961 Elvis Presley movie "Blue Hawaii."

## Building drug bust

**NH** ROCHESTER — Police are investigating drug activity at an Academy Street apartment house and arrested five people this weekend.

Two people living in one of the apartments were arrested along with a third person visiting the home. Two others were arrested as they left the building. Three of those arrested face drug-related charges. Two were arrested on warrants stemming from other cases.

Police said they recovered an undisclosed quantity of prescription painkillers and drug paraphernalia.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

## FACES

See  
Hawke  
juggle

Fans of the 'Assault on Precinct 13' star will be seeing a lot of him this year

BY STEVEN REA  
Knight Ridder/Tribune

"There's something kind of pleasing about working in these genres," says Ethan Hawke, who stars as a shellshocked police sergeant in the gleefully generic "Assault on Precinct 13."

"It's like jazz musicians, taking a very familiar, very commercial tune — say, 'Jingle Bells' — and then you put a spin on it. You know exactly how it's going to work. You just have to riff around it."

"Jingle Bells" is a good example, since "Assault on Precinct 13" — which opened in the States last week and is a remake of John Carpenter's 1976 police station siege pic — is set at the end of the Christmas holiday week, on New Year's Eve.

Hawke is the top gun in a virtually deserted Detroit precinct house, sharing the graveyard shift with an oversexed secretary (Drea De Matteo) and an over-the-hill beat cop (Brian Dennehy). And then a bus full of bad guys — among them Laurence Fishburne, John Leguizamo and Ja Rule — is diverted to the station, and Maria Bello, who plays Hawke's character's shrink, shows up too. And Gabriel Byrne chews up a lot of scenery as a tainted police detective. And then all heck breaks loose. "I knew of John Carpenter's movie," says Hawke about the original "Assault," which had a cast led by Austin Stoker, Darwin Joston and Laurie Zimmer. (Who, who and who?) "I'd seen it when I was younger, and then I never even really watched it again."

So when director Jean-François Richet and producer-writer James DeMonaco came along, Hawke sat and talked, and then he read the script. "I was looking to do something new, something that didn't take itself too seriously. I had a real good time working on 'Training Day,' and I was seeing if I could follow up that genre."

In some ways, Hawke's character, Jake Roenick, can be seen as the what-could-have-been continuation of his "Training Day" role — the new kid riding with the rogue L.A. narc played by Denzel Washington. (Washington won an Oscar for his work in the 2001 release, and Hawke was nominated for one.) As "Assault on Precinct 13" begins,



Actor Ethan Hawke has a lot of things going on right now: Rehearsals for the 20th-anniversary revival of David Rabe's lacerating Hollywood theater piece, "Hurly Burly," an Academy Award best screenplay nomination for "Before Sunset" and juggling down notes for his next novel.

Hawke is once again undercover, consorting with dealers, worried about the lives of his team.

"In a way, it could have been a sequel," he notes. "If Jake was sitting in a precinct house outside of L.A. instead of Detroit ... it could easily be where this guy had ended up."

"But all that is hindsight. Truth is, it was an entertaining script and I liked the part."

Hawke, 34, has a lot of things going on right now: He's in rehearsals for the 20th-anniversary revival of David Rabe's lacerating Hollywood theater piece, "Hurly Burly," which opens in New York Jan. 27 and also stars Bobby Cannavale, Parker Posey and Wallace Shawn.

In the past two weeks, he has landed an Academy Award best screenplay nomination and a Writers Guild best screenplay nomination — in cahoots with director Richard Linklater and Julie Delpy — for "Before Sunset," a film he and Delpy starred in that landed on many a critic's Top 10 of 2004 list. Hawke reports that he's begun to "daydream" and jot down notes for his next novel (he's published two). And he recently finished up work on "Lord of War," with Nicolas Cage, Jared Leto and Bridget Moynahan. Andrew Niccol, who cast Hawke opposite Uma Thurman in 1997's "Gattaca," wrote and directed the tale of gun-runners in Africa.

"In a simplistic way, it's a portrait of the devil," says Hawke of the film, slated for a midyear release. "It answers the question: How do X million people die in Rwanda and in the Congo and Sierra Leone and these places? Well, somebody sells them AK-47s."

"Who is it that sells them? It's these guys that go to the poorest places in the world and sell arms to both sides of a dispute and then leave town."

"And they make millions and millions of dollars off of other people killing each other. It's kind of a fascinating expose."

"And they make millions and millions of dollars off of other people killing each other. It's kind of a fascinating expose."



Laurence Fishburne, left, and Ethan Hawke appear in the action flick "Assault on Precinct 13," which recently opened in the States.

## Starr, Lee pair for comic book adventure

And you thought he could only play the drums. Former Beatle Ringo Starr and comic book mogul Stan Lee announced a partnership Wednesday to launch an original entertainment franchise of an animated persona based on and voiced by Starr.

"Ringo is beloved worldwide for his commitment to people and his singular wit," said Lee, the man responsible for the likes of Spider-Man and The Hulk. "Our Ringo Superhero character will combine these qualities, along with Ringo's secret powers which people generally didn't know about because he has kept them secret — until now."

Starr's alter ego is described as an "evil-battling, Earth-saving — though reluctant — superhero with a great sense of rhythm."

Financed, produced and distributed by IDT Entertainment, Lee's POW! Entertainment will develop the project alongside Starr's Rocca Bella company for television, DVD, publishing and other ventures.

Production on the series will begin this year, with a DVD planned for release in the beginning of 2006.



Starr

## Late singer honored with stamp

The late singer Marian Anderson, famed for her contralto voice, was honored on a U.S. postage stamp in a ceremony Thursday.

First-day of issue ceremonies for the stamp were held at DAR Constitution Hall, where the singer was once deemed a chance to perform in the 1930s because she was black.

"There is no more richly deserving of such an honor," commented James DePreist, director of conducting at The Juilliard School in New York and Anderson's nephew.

"I hope that it will give an opportunity for there to be a focus of attention on her, particularly her artistry," he said.

DePreist likened Anderson's success to that of Jackie Robinson, the first black major league baseball player. "When history collides with what you just want to do, your career, then what happens depends on how much grace resides within you," he said.

## Europe festival to feature Black Sabbath

Ozzy Osbourne and heavy metal pioneers Black Sabbath will be among the headliners at this year's Roskilde

Festival, one of Europe's largest music events.

Osbourne, who grew up in Birmingham, central England, rose to stardom with Black Sabbath in the 1970s before launching a solo career. It will be the band's sole summer festival appearance, organizers said Wednesday.

Last year, 75,000 tickets were sold for the outdoor event, where more than 150 artists, including the Pixies, Morrissey, Sahara Nightingales and Avril Lavigne, performed on Roskilde's six stages.

First held in 1971, the festival in Roskilde, 25 miles west of the capital, Copenhagen, was inspired by the 1969 Woodstock Festival in upstate New York. It attracts visitors from throughout Europe and the United States.

## Dick Clark recuperating at home

"American Bandstand" icon Dick Clark is recuperating at home after a minor stroke put him in the hospital for more than seven weeks.

Clark, 75, returned to his Malibu home Wednesday and was grateful for the many cards and letters he received during his hospital stay, publicist Paul Shefrin said.

"He was very touched by the outpouring of support, not only from the celebrity world but from the people on the streets of New York," Shefrin said.

For the first time in 32 years, Clark was unable to host his "New Year's Rockin' Eve" show from Times Square. Daytime talk show host Regis Philbin stood in while Clark was in the hospital and

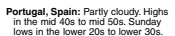
During the broadcast, fans on the street held up "Get Well Dick" signs.

Photos and stories from The Associated Press






Clark





	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise (Baghdad)	7:01 AM	7:00 AM
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	8:04 AM	8:02 AM
Sunset (Baghdad)	5:32 PM	5:33 PM
Sunset (Frankfurt)	5:15 PM	5:17 PM

			
Last qtr.	New moon.	First qtr.	Full moon

Check our Relocation Guide  
every Saturday to find  
Realtors at your new station.

**STARS AND STRIPES**  
Your Hometown Newspaper

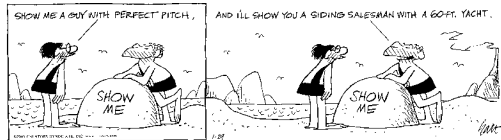




Fotrot



B.C.



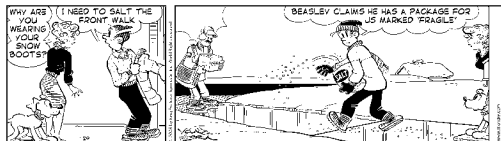
Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



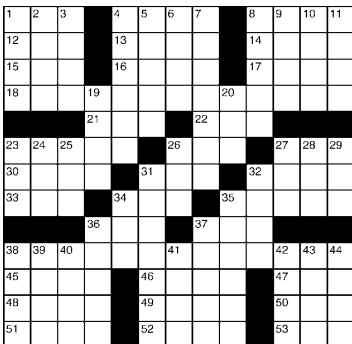
Hagar



Garfield



## Eugene Sheffer Crossword



## Across

- 1 Upper limit  
4 Exchange  
8 Walton and Waterston  
12 Inseparable  
13 Arizona tribe  
14 Slightly  
15 "Monty Python" opener  
16 Mad king of literature  
17 Llama land  
18 Eponym of an Idaho jazz festival  
21 U.K. def. bk.  
22 Rotation duration  
23 "Pacific Overtures" setting  
26 Co-host of "The View"  
27 Moonshine holder  
30 Beehive State  
31 Indulge in fusticuts  
32 McGwire competitor  
33 Cowboy's nickname  
34 Enjoyment  
35 Winning  
36 Churchill's "so few" (Abbr.)  
38 Back  
39 "Baby, I Love Your Way" singer  
45 Count  
46 Jam ingredient?  
47 Mimic  
48 On the briny

## Down

- 1 Spring wind?  
2 Con  
3 Chilean money  
4 Ill will  
5 Handle effectively  
6 Asian nursemaid  
7 Confusing contradiction  
8 Over-sentimental  
9 Drive the getaway car  
10 Painter Joan  
11 Dazzle  
12 Grandson of Methuselah  
20 Cape —, N.J.  
23 Protrude  
24 Noshed  
25 TV network  
26 Garfield's owner  
27 — Montana  
28 OAS member  
29 Roam about  
31 Bewilder  
32 Buy stuff  
34 Somewhere out there  
35 Weaponry storehouse  
36 Take it easy  
37 Deadly  
38 Carrots' mates  
39 Right on the map  
40 Low club  
41 Devastation  
42 Mexican entree  
43 October stone  
44 Dweeb

## Answer to Previous Puzzle



1-29

## CRYPTOQUIP

T Z P H I W J X L Y P O C J X I Z E  
W P N V L X W E P V J H P C J T P O N  
E X R R J E P I Z J E P S W P

O P Y N H D X P H I R S C V P H I E .  
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: A LOCAL TAVERN HAS THIS MOTTO IN ITS ADVERTISEMENTS: "THIRST COME, THIRST SERVED."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals P

# Mother-in-law needs her own life

**Dear Abby:** My husband and I are very happy. However, his mother is an intrusive pest. I am a stay-at-home mom, and she calls all day long. When I answer, I get an earful about how often her son calls or doesn't call her, or she finds fault with the things I do with my children. If I don't answer, she comes over to our house.

The other day, she knew that I was going to my mom's office to drop some stuff off and help her with some things. When I arrived, there was my husband's mother, sitting there waiting for me. Also, when my husband confides in her — like when I got pregnant — she takes it upon herself to call my family and announce it instead of allowing me to tell them myself.

I love my husband. We are happy together. But I have reached the point where I'm beginning to consider divorce in

order to get away from his mother. He has offered to speak to her, but I feel bad because I know she'll know I asked him to say something. What should I do?

**Tearing My Hair Out**  
*Dear Tearing:* You have described a lonely, needy person

**Dear Abby**



with too much time on her hands. Rather than expecting you to entertain her, she needs to get a life of her own.

Your husband should talk to his mother and encourage her to find other interests. If she blames you, so be it. However, he would be doing her a favor to help her investigate what activities and opportunities are available for seniors in your community in case she's so passive she doesn't know how to reach out.

**Dear Abby:** My companion and lover, "Jimmy," stole \$40 from some close friends of mine. He was caught, confronted, and paid the money back. I told

Jimmy if anything like that ever happened again, he was out the door.

I am willing to forget the incident and move on, however, my two friends feel differently. It has created a wedge between us. They continue to talk to me on the phone at work, but Jimmy's name is never mentioned. Yesterday, when I casually mentioned the four of us getting together, I was informed that it would never happen. I did nothing wrong, but I am feeling ostracized.

**In the Middle**  
in Columbia, S.C.  
*Dear In the Middle:* You are not being ostracized, Jimmy is — and for good reason. He has sticky friends. Allow me to offer two suggestions: If he'd steal from your friends, he would also steal from you, so keep your valuables under lock and key. And socialize with your friends without him.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 69404, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at: <http://www.uepress.com/dearabby>  
Universal Press Syndicate

## JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CLECY

VARAL

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DYKLIN

GLABEN

www.jumble.com

Print answer here:

Answers Monday

Yesterday's

Jumbles: WINCE HEDGE REBUKE COERCE  
Answer: Knitted with a complex stitch — HER BROW

## THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

# Be honest with tag-a-long roommate

**Dear Annie:** I am a college sophomore, and I have a problem with my roommate, "Janie." Janie and I are friends, but not really close.

Whenever I am invited out, however, she assumes she is invited, too. I would feel awful telling her she can't come with, because I suspect she doesn't have any other friends. My friends like her well enough, but things always seem a little awkward when she's around.

Just because we're roommates, does that mean we are joined at the hip? I don't want to be selfish, nor do I want to be mean to Janie, but this situation is really making me dislike her. Being with her 24/7 is too much time spent with one person. How can I distance myself from Janie, socially, without hurting her feelings?

**Annoyed Roommate**  
*Dear Annoyed:* You and Janie are in college, now, and it's time for you to grit your teeth and take

**Annie's Mailbox**



on the hard tasks. Talk to Janie.

Explain that it isn't healthy (not to mention it can damage the friendship) to be together 24/7. She needs to develop her own social life and extracurricular activities. College provides a wonderful opportunity to meet a culturally diverse collection of people your own age, and she

shouldn't squander it. Encourage Janie to join some campus organizations, find a part-time job, do volunteer work or tutor. If things don't improve, you might consider finding another roommate next year.

**Dear Annie:** This is in response to "Frustrated Parents in Illinois," who have a 4-year-old autistic son. He has trouble dealing with rude comments about their son's behavior in public. I have two autistic children and can relate.

The Autism Society of Ameri-

ca offers a business card you can hand to people. One side explains the characteristics of autism, and the other tells how to communicate with those who have autism.

I have presented this card to friends who were curious, to my son's T-ball coach and to complete strangers. It also includes a note to policemen, firemen, etc., that the autistic person may not understand or communicate, which makes it a good tool to place in your child's pocket or backpack.

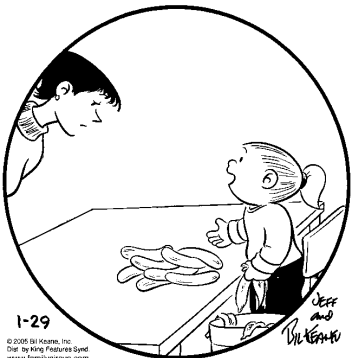
The card not only educates others, but it stops rude people in their tracks. You can order 100 of these cards for \$18 through the Autism Society of America ([autism-society.org](http://autism-society.org)) at 1-800-3AUTISM (1-800-328-8476).

**B.L.L.**  
*Dear B.L.L.:* What a wonderful resource. Thank you.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to [anniesmailbox@comcast.net](mailto:anniesmailbox@comcast.net), or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

## Family Circus



"I peeled all the bananas for our lunches next week."

## GRAFFITI

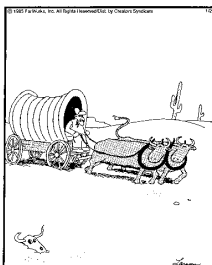


**Dennis the Menace**



**© Gary Larson**

**The Far Side**



**Non Sequitur**









# Karl rejoins NBA with new appreciation

BY JOHN MARSHALL  
The Associated Press

DENVER — George Karl had been involved with basketball since the seventh grade, so not having it in his life for nearly two years left him feeling empty.

Now that he's headed back to the NBA, Karl has a greater appreciation for what the game has meant to him.

Out of the NBA since the Bucks fired him in 2003, Karl was back in Milwaukee on Thursday to take over as coach of the underachieving Denver Nuggets. He's expected to be on the bench Friday night, making his debut with the Nuggets against his former team.

"The last 18 months was the first time I was not with a basketball team for 38 years," Karl said. "I now realize how fun and what a privilege it is to be with a basketball team."

The Nuggets hope his enthusiasm rubs off.

One of the favorites in the Western Conference at the start of the season, Denver hasn't lived up to the expectations that came with adding All-Star power forward Kenyon Martin to a team that had reached the playoffs for the first time in nine years.

Plagued by injuries and inconsistencies,



George Karl answers questions at a news conference Thursday in Milwaukee. Karl was hired as coach of the Denver Nuggets.

the Nuggets got off to a horrible start and haven't really recovered. Coach Jeff Bzdelik lost his job Dec. 28 and Denver has been only marginally better under interim coach Michael Cooper, entering Friday's game 17-25 and 12½ games out of first place in the Northwest Division.

Karl brings plenty of credibility, ranking

13th with 708 career wins and leading his teams to five division titles and 13 playoff appearances in 16 seasons. He also had experience turning around underachieving teams.

Karl helped Seattle reach the playoffs in 1991-92 after a 20-20 start cost coach C. Jones his job, and led the Sonics to three 60-win seasons in five years, including a trip to the 1996 NBA Finals.

"He's clearly one of the best coaches in the NBA, has always been so and his record exhibits that," Nuggets General Manager Kiki Vandeweghe said. "We are very excited to have him with us."

Karl can be feisty and confrontational, but it might be just what the Nuggets need.

With a lineup that includes Martin, Carmelo Anthony, Andre Miller and Marcus Camby, Denver certainly doesn't lack talent. What the Nuggets seem to need is motivation.

Things got better under Cooper, who will stand on an assistant, but Denver still only won four of 14 games and had trouble closing out the close ones. Injuries have taken a toll, but there were too many times when players stood around on defense or failed to run hard on the break.

Karl isn't likely to stand for lackadaisical

effort. He's had clashes with players at just about every stop in his coaching career, particularly in Milwaukee, where always seems to get the best out of them. Besides, the time off has allowed him to take a look at his approach to coaching.

Karl always has his sights on getting Anthony to shape up.

A star as a rookie last season, Anthony has had some growing pains this year. He had a difficult summer that included a clash with coach Larry Brown at the Olympics, a fight at a New York nightclub, then was caught with marijuana in his backpack during the preseason (the charge was dropped after a friend said the pot was his).

Anthony has had plenty of troubles on the court as well, struggling with shootings woes and ankle injuries. If the Nuggets are going to have success, Karl knows it will start with Anthony.

"I'm going to be demanding of certain things that he might not be happy with, but I also respect that he's a great talent," Karl said. "He being successful will only make my job successful. I'm just going to communicate with him, let him know I'm not in a hurry to teach him professionalism. I see a great player that has plateaued."

Associated Press Writer Ryan Nakashima in Milwaukee contributed to this story.

## Bulls finally figuring out patience will trump panic

KEEP IN MIND THAT COACH Scott Skiles got paid a lot to make sure the Bulls' glass always is half-full. Anybody else who says they see the Chicago Bulls in the playoff hunt midway through this season is either lying or not as good a doctor as the one explaining they've been in a coma.

The reason has little to do with the speed of the Bulls' turn around or the lack of precedent. The NBA's mantra, after all, is "everybody makes a run," and just last season, the Miami Heat stumbled 0-7 leaving the game and still managed to close a respectable 42-40 and make the playoffs.

So why not the Bulls? Before we tackle that question, a word from Skiles.

"That 0-9 start was probably the scariest thing we'd had since this season," Skiles said after practice the other day.

"But even then, we never saw ourselves being any 0-9 team. At one point it didn't feel that way. So that gave us a mental head start in turning things around. We are always had confidence that we are a good team."

With Thursday night's visit by the Charlotte Bobcats marking the official midpoint of the season, the Bulls suddenly find themselves in a very good team. They beat the Bobcats 101-93 and have won five straight, 12 of 13, and 18 of the last 22. Even in a weak Eastern Conference and a league filled with surprises, that has to be the most surprising development of all.

Skiles, of course, had a perfectly reasonable explanation.

"We went from virtually last in the league to first in one major defensive statistic," he said, referring to his team's ability to hold opponents to a league-low 41 percent field-goal shooting percent-

Jim Litke



as six weeks ago had no reason to believe their commitment and tough love were about to be rewarded.

Franchises reach tipping points all the time, and at that moment, this future of Chicago's looked a lot more like the Clippers than one just a half-dozen years removed from the salad days of Michael Jordan. What the Bulls had in common with the Clippers was a handful of losing seasons, a team loaded with underachieving draft picks and disgruntled veterans who viewed Chicago as a rest stop on the way to somewhere else.

Paxson turned out to be shrewder than his predecessor Jerry Krause. He found better players in the draft and patiently pruned the roster instead of cutting down the roster and starting over every more time. Then he cut meddling and let the hard-nosed Skiles do the rest.

Even so, as recently as December, the Bulls were flopping and offers were coming in for Eddy Curry and Tyson Chandler, the high school phenoms whose arrested development was the legacy of the last administration. Paxson surrounded them with a better mix of veterans and rookies that turned out to be much better advertised. And while some of Skiles' tenacity had clearly

rubbed off on the young Bulls and even the old ones, on paper nothing looked different.

Coachlike to say that losing affords better teaching opportunities than winning, but the Bulls had lost so much that the opposite turned out to be true. Three of the rookies who came to Chicago

Duke's Luol Deng and Chris Duhon and Connecticut's Ben Gordon — came from winning programs and floor leader LeRon Hickrich is just two seasons removed from Kansas. Confidence is a fragile commodity everywhere in sports, but at those places, patience always trumps panic.

In Skiles, they found a coach willing to risk his own neck to buy them the time to work it out. And each, in turn, stepped up every night as a kind of payback. Those lessons have been reinforcing themselves ever since.

"In this stretch, we're just finding ways to win," Hickrich marveled. "Last year, we were finding ways to lose."

He got the wrong idea: The Bulls may look, and play, like one big happy family, but winning hasn't made Skiles go soft. A few minutes after a grueling practice ended last Friday at 11 a.m. when his players used to head back to the locker room, the coach was still nearly full. Two days earlier, the Bulls' seven-game winning streak had been snapped in Boston, and the quiet ride on the way to the airport spoke volumes.

"What was interesting to me was you could hear a pin drop in the bus. It was very quiet. You win seven in a row, you feel like, there could be a little 'No big deal'."

"It is," Skiles said to everyone still within earshot, "a big deal."

Jim Litke is a national sports columnist for Stars and Stripes. Write to him at: jlitke@ap.org

## James likely to miss game with ankle injury

The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — President Bush wasn't the only notable figure to miss the Cleveland Clinic on Thursday. LeBron James needed another checkup.

James underwent further medical tests on his left ankle, which is not as badly hurt as it looked.

**NBA briefs**

James' trainers stumbled to the floor in the fourth quarter Wednesday night.

James traveled with his teammates to New York but was not expected to play Friday night against the Knicks.

"From the looks of things, I doubt very seriously if he'll play tomorrow," coach Paul Silas said. "We were hoping and praying that it wasn't anything serious."

About the same time Bush was watching his health, James was being examined during a forum at the hospital, James had a thorough examination which did not reveal any more damage to his ankle.

He'll be re-evaluated by trainer Max Benton on Friday and is currently listed as a game-time decision. He came down on the foot of Memphis forward Dahntay Jones and rolled his ankle on Wednesday night.

**Attorneys: Bryant accused settled with tabloids**

DENVER — The woman accusing Kobe Bryant of rape reached a money settlement with the owners of The Globe and other tabloids that printed her picture and stories about a 1997 encounter with the NBA star. Bryant's attorneys said Thursday.

The tabloid publisher American Media Inc. agreed to pay the

woman an undisclosed sum, according to court documents filed by the defense in the woman's civil lawsuit against Bryant.

Bryant's lawyers, who did not disclose how they found out about the alleged settlement, said the woman's attorneys should have notified them.

L. Lin Wood, an attorney representing Bryant, said he did not immediately return phone messages Thursday.

The suit seeks unspecified damages from Bryant for alleged emotional injuries the woman suffered since their encounter at a hotel near Vail in June 2003. The Los Angeles Star said the sex was consensual.

Information about the alleged settlement with American Media came in a court filing supporting Bryant's claim that media organizations and other outside sources were at least partly responsible for the woman's alleged injuries.

**Wallace's brother in court**

ROCHESTER HILLS, Mich.

The brother of Detroit Pistons All-Star Ben Wallace appeared in court Thursday and was released on a \$500 personal bond on charges stemming from one of the most violent brawls in NBA history.

David Wallace was among 12 people — five Indiana Pacers players and seven fans attending the Pacers-Pistons game at The Palace of Auburn Hills on Nov. 19 — to be charged in the melee.

A not guilty plea to the charge of misdemeanor assault and battery was entered on his behalf, said Paul Walton, an assistant Oakland County prosecutor.

Another Pistons player, Bryant Jackson, was ordered Tuesday to stand trial on a felonious assault charge for allegedly tossing a chair.

# Hewitt heads off Roddick in semifinals

Australian to face Safin for men's singles title; Kuznetsova-Molik team takes women's doubles final

BY PAUL ALEXANDER

The Associated Press

MELBOURNE, Australia — Lleyton Hewitt won with aggressive, fist-pumping best Friday, withstanding 31 aces by Andy Roddick in a 3-6, 7-6 (3), 7-6 (4), 6-1 victory to reach the Australian Open final.

Hewitt, who has angered three opponents with his shouts to pump himself up, fired up the crowd. But one man was too vocal for Roddick's tastes — he complained about a fan shouting dur-

ing his service motion in the seventh game of the third set.

Hewitt will face fourth-seeded Marat Safin on Sunday evening in a matchup of former top-ranked players, the first men's Grand Slam final scheduled for the night. Safin ended top-ranked Roger Federer's 26-match winning streak in the other semifinal. Hewitt is trying to become the first Australian man to win this major since Mark Edmondson in 1976. Pat Cash lost the 1987 and 1988 finals.

Hewitt dropped to his knees once his victory was secure, kissing the court and hitting a ball high into the air as the crowd roared.

"Always said I'd do anything to have chance to play in the first night final here in history, and I've got my chance," Hewitt said. "It's awesome. It's a little bit hard to believe at the moment. I love this place."

The women's final pits top-ranked Lindsay Davenport against seventh-seeded Serena Williams on Saturday.

In the women's doubles final, U.S. Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova and Australia's Alicia Molik defeated Davenport and Corina Morariu 6-3, 6-4. Davenport and Morariu lost to Serena Williams and Venus Williams in the 2001 final in Australia.

In between, Morariu underwent chemotherapy for leukemia and has had two shoulder operations.



Andy Roddick complains to the umpire about a spectator yelling during his serve during loss to Lleyton Hewitt in the men's singles semifinal in the Australian Open on Friday night. Hewitt won the match, 3-6, 7-6, 7-6, 6-1 and will play Marat Safin of Russia in the final.

Hewitt has won major titles at Wimbledon in 2002 and the U.S. Open in 2001. Safin won the 2000 U.S. Open and has lost two previous Australian finals, including last year against Federer.

Roddick said the tiebreakers were the difference.

"I'm usually pretty money in those," Roddick said. "Either one of those would have given me a distinct advantage. I'm mad. I felt I was in there with a shot. He put himself in position to win big points. I donated a little more than I would have wanted."

Roddick came out hot, jumping ahead 2-0. The second-seeded American converted his fourth break-point opportunity when Hewitt hit a forehand that was called good but TV replays indicated was just long.

As he has done so often, Roddick relied on his blistering serve

to get out of early trouble. He had six aces as he served at 5-3, which then to fend off four of Hewitt's five break points in the game. He then finished off the set with another two.

Roddick made it seven aces in a row with four in the next game.

But Hewitt had only three unfurled errors in the second set, while marking the first appearance of his trademark "Come on!" which pointed his fingers at his forehead in the 16th game — much later than usual.

The third-seeded Aussie still needed a tiebreaker — Roddick had won all three that they had played despite the Australian's 4-1 record in head-to-head meetings — to even the match. Hewitt had the only ace to pull ahead 6-3, and Roddick netted a backhand on the next point.

After cracking 23 aces in the

Australian Open	
Friday	At Melbourne Park, Melbourne, Australia
Purse: \$142 million (Grand Slam)	
Men	
Singles	Lleyton Hewitt (3), Australia, def. Andy Roddick (2), United States, 3-6, 7-6 (3), 7-6 (4), 6-1.
Doubles	Svetlana Kuznetsova, Russia, and Alicia Molik (6), Australia, def. Lindsay Davenport and Corina Morariu (15), United States, 6-3, 6-4.
Mixed	
Quarterfinals	Max Mirnyi, Belarus, and Martina Navratilova (7), United States, def. Wayne Black and Cara Black (2), Zimbabwe, 7-6, 6-4.
Semifinals	
Championship	Scott Draper and Samantha Stosur, Australia, def. Andy Ram, Israel, and Conchita Martinez, Spain, 7-5, 6-3.

first two sets, Roddick had only eight in the last two.

Roddick went ahead in the third set when Hewitt double-faulted at break point. But serving at 4-2, 30-30, Roddick — clearly trying to put a little extra on his second serve — double-faulted twice to return the favor. He had only six double-faults in the previous five matches, but had nine against Hewitt.

At the changeover, Roddick complained to chair umpire Andreas Egli about a fan calling out during his service motion. When Egli indicated he couldn't control everyone in the crowd, Roddick responded, "You're telling me I can have someone shout during every one of his serves and you can't do anything about it?"

He complained again in the next game after someone shouted as he served at 40-0 after his 27th ace.

"I just took one jackass to shoot out," Roddick said later, adding the crowd overall was "very respectful."

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# Mickelson trails Ogilvie in quest for Hope repeat

The Associated Press

LA QUINTA, Calif. — Phil Mickelson expects Joe Ogilvie to win a tournament any day now. He just hopes it's not this Sunday.

Mickelson, going for his second consecutive Bob Hope Chrysler Classic victory and third in four years, is three shots behind Ogilvie heading into the third round of the five-day tournament.

Ogilvie shot a 9-under 63 on Thursday to go to 17-under 127 through two rounds. Mickelson had a 64 and was tied for second with Fredrik Jacobson of Sweden, who had a 62.

Mickelson thinks Ogilvie is due.

"I thought he was going to win New Orleans last year, the way he played," Mickelson said. "He lost by a shot to a very hot Vijay Singh, but I think he's ready to win now."

"It's going to take all I can do to fight him off."

Ogilvie, whose tie for second at New Orleans last year was his best finish on the tour, was not conceding that he was the second-round leader of the Hope. Players rotate among four

## Golf roundup

courses the first four days of the 90-hole event, with some of the layouts more difficult.

"Mickelson shot a 64 today at La Quinta," said Ogilvie, who had his 63 at Bermuda Dunes. "I'd say technically he's probably leading. Score-wise, I am, but technically I'd say he's leading."

"That's Duke math," the former economics major said, grinning.

Mickelson summed it up differently.

"I feel like I'm three back," he said.

Pred Couples and Billy Mayfair were in a group of five at 13 under. Couples had a 66 and Mayfair a 64.

Ogilvie began the tournament with a 64 and was at 127 for two rounds. His 17 under is the third-most shots below par through 36 holes in PGA Tour history.

Tom Lehman was 19 under after two rounds at Las Vegas in 2001, after Joe Durant was 18

under through 36 holes on his way to winning the Hope earlier that year. Lehman's 125 tied Tiger Woods and Mark Calcavecchia for low 36-hole score, with Woods' coming on a par-70 course and Calcavecchia on a par-71 layout.

Ogilvie, 30, was not surprised by the low total through two rounds of the Hope this time, although he chuckled and said, "I'm just surprised that I did it."

"You look at the history of golf. I don't think I'm going to see any encyclopedias of golf," he said.

Ogilvie finished his round with a gamble that paid off on No. 18, lofting a 5-wood over palm trees to within 5 feet of the pin and then rolling in the eagle putt.

He's coming off his most successful year on the tour, with the \$1.4 million he earned in 2004 more than his previous four years combined.

## Dougherty surges into lead in Caltex Masters

SINGAPORE — England's Nick Dougherty shot a 5-under 67 Friday, including a long eagle, to

take a one-stroke lead in Singapore's Caltex Masters.

Dougherty was at 9-under 135 through two rounds.

Defending champion Colin Montgomerie was second at 136 following a second-round 71.

Denmark's Thomas Bjorn, who shot a 3-under 134 and tied for second with China's Liang Wenchong (68), Jamie Donaldson of Wales (68) and Danny Chia of Malaysia (70).

Teeing off from the back nine, Dougherty added six birdies to his eagle against one bogey.

Dougherty hit a monster 3-wood to eagle the par-5 seventh with a 288 yard first shot that found the cup.

"It was the best feeling I've ever had. I hit it great," he said. "I think Vijay (Singh) or Tiger (Woods) would be pretty pleased with that one."

Montgomerie, the overnight leader after a superb round of 65 on a 288 yard hole, had trouble with his approach shots Friday.

"I didn't hit irons close enough, that was all, and I three-putted twice. I didn't get the pace of the greens at all today," said the Scotsman, who carded two bogeys and three birdies.

# Do-or-die game, Georgia Tech does it

The Associated Press

ATLANTA — Although it's still January, Georgia Tech needed this game in the worst way.

The Yellow Jackets had lost three in a row, squandered a 17-point lead over Wake Forest and were on the verge of a crushing defeat when Jarrett Jack stepped to the free-throw line with 4.4 seconds left in overtime.

"I told myself that I had to come through for my team," Jack said. "The mark of a great team is being able to put the past behind you."

After gathering himself with a stroll toward the opposite foul line, Jack calmly made both free throws to give No. 22 Georgia Tech a 102-101 victory over the fifth-ranked Demon Deacons on Thursday night.

Wake Forest got the last shot, but Chris Paul missed at the buzzer. He also had a chance to win it at the end of regulation, but that attempt fell off the rim, too.

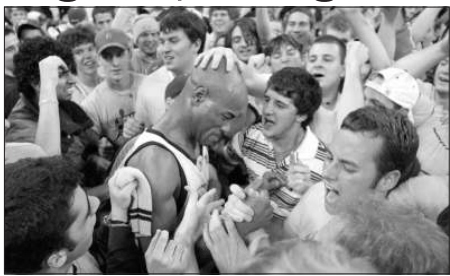
"Coach said, 'Get the ball and try to get to the basket,'" Paul said. "I just missed it."

Georgia Tech (12-5, 3-3) built a 34-17 lead in the first half, but Wake Forest (16-3, 4-2) rallied behind Eric Williams, who scored 27 points and was nearly unstoppable on the inside.

Williams didn't get much help from Paul. The leading vote-getter on the AP's preseason All-America team managed only eight points, missing nine of 11 shots. Will Bynum scored a career-high 30 points for Georgia Tech and spent time guarding Paul.

"We take pride in stopping great players," Bynum said. "He's a great player, so we try to play him as physically as possible. Don't let him get into rhythm. Be there in every game."

Georgia Tech's student body storm



Georgia Tech's Jarrett Jack is mobbed by fans after the Yellow Jackets beat No. 5 Wake Forest 102-101 in overtime Thursday night. Jack's two free throws decided the outcome.

the court after the final miss, setting off a raucous celebration that lasted several minutes. Weary players from both teams struggled just to make it to their locker rooms.

The Yellow Jackets started the season in the top five, but three straight ACC losses sent them tumbling in the rankings. They had to bounce back from a stunning upset at home by Virginia Tech last Saturday.

"This may have been make or break for this season," Bynum said. "If we had lost this game, it could have destroyed our confidence."

It was a game that didn't want to end, stretching on for nearly three hours and leaving both teams huffing and puffing. Georgia Tech's Isma'il Muhammad headed off the court with severe leg cramps, but the pain subsided after he was injected

with fluids. He finished the game with both arms wrapped in gauze.

After Jack put the Yellow Jackets ahead, Wake Forest took off up the court. Paul missed a desperation shot as the horn sounded, but the refs signaled that the Demon Deacons had called a timeout.

The clock was reset to 2:28 seconds and Wake Forest inbounded the ball near mid-court. Jack fell down trying to keep up with Paul, but it didn't matter when the final shot fell harmlessly off the rim.

Clearly, the Yellow Jackets seem to have figured out Paul, who was held to a career-low two points in the game at Atlanta last year.

"We have a lot of big bodies," Jack said. "That's something he's not used to... Size bothers anybody."

Williams' size bothered the Yellow Jackets. The 6-foot-9, 291-pound junior repeatedly muscled through double- and triple-teams to reach the basket.

"I couldn't let them stop me," he said. "No matter how many guys they put on me, I had to get around them."

Williams met his match near the end of a game — a cram that forced him to the bench.

"I was crying after the game. I felt I let my team down," he said. "I was so disappointed about having to come out."

Justin Gray added 22 points for Wake Forest.

"I'm proud of our guys," Wake Forest coach Skip Prosser said. "We battled back and certainly had a chance to win it in the end."

**No. 11 Arizona 91, No. 10 Washington 82:** The Wildcats went 38-for-40 from the free-throw line and took over first place in the Pac-10.

Salim Stoudamire had 25 points for Arizona (17-3, 7-1), which made 31 straight from the line at one stretch. Stoudamire's three-point play on a leading baseline bank shot with 44 seconds left gave the Wildcats an 88-82 lead.

Brandon Roy had 15 points, nine rebounds and seven assists for the visiting Huskies (16-3, 6-2), who beat Arizona three times in last season.

**No. 15 Michigan 51, Michigan 53:** Maurice Ager scored 18 points and the Spartans (13-3, 5-1 Big Ten) won for the 11th time in 12 games.

Don Harris and Courtney Sims each had 12 points for the visiting Wolverines (12-8, 3-3), who lost to their in-state rival for the 11th time in 12 games.

**No. 21 Cincinnati 74, South Florida 48:** Eric Hick had 19 points and 11 rebounds for the visiting Bearcats (16-3, 5-1 Conference USA), who beat South Florida for the 14th straight time.

South Florida's Jeff Green had 27 points for South Florida (8-9, 1-5), which has lost five straight.

## New attitude, coach revitalize Georgetown

By JOSEPH WHITE

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In his first game as Georgetown's basketball coach, John Thompson III looked in his players' faces in the halftime huddle and was suddenly struck by the full impact of the Hoyas' struggles of recent years.

"The look on their faces when we got down was, 'It's over.' And we're at halftime," Thompson said.

The score was 38-25. The Hoyas went on to lose 75-57 to Temple.

"Coaching that game was different," Thompson said. "We had to do something. That had to be addressed."

How? "It wouldn't be pretty if I told you how," the coach said. "It's not always fun. Some lessons are hard-learned."

Whatever the method, the attitude adjustment has worked. The down-and-out look hasn't resurfaced. Georgetown, picked to finish 11th of 12 teams in the preseason Big East coaches' poll, has become the surprise of the conference. Despite starting three freshmen — a necessity caused by the sudden drain in senior players — the Hoyas have already reached their victory total of last year, when Craig Esherick was fired following a demoralizing nine-game losing streak that ended a 13-15 season.

The players who looked beaten at halftime in that Temple game have overcome second-half deficits of six or more points to defeat Pittsburgh, Villanova and Rutgers and have taken Syracuse to overtime. Fresh-

man Roy Hibbert's dunk just before the buzzer beat Notre Dame last Sunday and prompted students to storm the court, further evidence that Thompson's Hoyas will indeed fight to the finish.

"He came in and told us we're never out of the game," said freshman Jonathan Wallace, remembering the aftermath of the Temple loss. "As long as there is time left on the clock, there's a will and a way to win. So we don't give up."

Impressed yet? Thompson isn't. His self-described "methodical approach" — the perfect complement to his Princeton-style offensive scheme — doesn't leave room for grand statements — such as whether Georgetown is NCAA tournament-bound for the first time since 2001.

"It's too early to tell whether I'm impressed with this group or not," Thompson said. "Check with me in April.... I don't think it's good to look at the big picture. I don't think it's good to start thinking about wins and losses and this team or that team. You have to go out and prepare for the next game like that's the game — and that's how it's done. That's how we're approaching our year."

How low were the expectations when Thompson arrived? His own father, the Hall of Fame coach who led Georgetown to 596 victories and the 1984 national title before resigning in 1999, said early in the season that this Hoyas' roster might not be as talented as his teams from the formative years of the early 1970s.

What neither Thompson expected was the fast development of a group of freshmen determined to restore the Hoyas' legacy.



First-year coach John Thompson III, left, and freshman center Roy Hibbert, right, have helped Georgetown (13-5) reach its win total from last season.

Jeff Green is from Hyattsville, Md. Hibbert is from Adelphi, Md.

Like many high school stars in the area, they had dreamed of playing for Georgetown. There was one major catch: The dream was coming true just as the Hoyas were coming off their worst season in 31 years.

"That's what me and Jeff talked about when we were working out in the summer, from 9 in the morning to the 4 in the afternoon," Hibbert said. "We wanted to bring about change."

"We just wanted to come in," Green added quickly, "and let everybody know that Georgetown is coming back."

Green is already a three-time Big East rookie of the week, and Hibbert has won the honor once. Thompson is quick to point out that all his freshmen are "up and down," but he concedes they're coming along faster than he anticipated.

"They are looking comfortable, and we need them to," Thompson said. "They've played significant minutes, and that's been by design."

Wallace, a walk-on from Alabama originally recruited by Thompson when the coach was at Princeton, is the other freshman starter. The threesome has not only embraced the share-the-ball mentality of the Princeton offense, but also the Georgetown behavioral model that is the antithesis of the stereotypical modern athlete.

A deflated basketball remains on display in the basketball office, the same one that the elder Thompson used to drive home the lesson that a basketball career is a tenuous effort, just showing the consequences of it.

"Coach has stressed to us to be respectful young men," Wallace said. "Not every thing's about basketball. He's stressed the importance of how to act on and off the court, just showing the consequences of it. It's a model that was here before with his father, and we're just trying to carry on the legacy."



# Failed last-gasp negotiations put NHL season on life support

BY TOM GULITTI

The Record (Bergen County, N.J.)

NEW YORK — The glimmer of hope for the 2004-05 NHL season appeared to flicker off following Thursday night's meeting in New York.

According to a source, the league submitted an informal proposal featuring several salary cap-based plans. Predictably, the players, who have repeatedly said that a cap is a non-starter, were not pleased.

"We continue to have significant philosophical differences," NHLPA senior director Ted Saskin said in a statement. "No meetings are scheduled and we will not make further comment at this time."

The latest breakdown could be a deal to the season, though both sides apparently agreed to keep open the lines of communication.

Although NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman refuses to issue a deadline date, it is believed a deal would have to be struck before the end of the month to play this season.



AP photos

**NHLPA senior director Ted Saskin, left, and NHL vice president and chief legal officer Bill Daly, right, have participated in four meetings in a nine-day period. The sides are stuck in a stalemate; owners insist on a salary cap, which the players reject.**

The sides had originally planned to continue talking Friday in New York. Scrapping that plan appeared to be another negative sign.

"We are finished for the night," an NHL spokesman said in a statement. "Nothing further is scheduled."

The "philosophical differences" Saskin spoke of continue to be the league's insistence on "cost certainty" in the form of link between salaries and revenue and

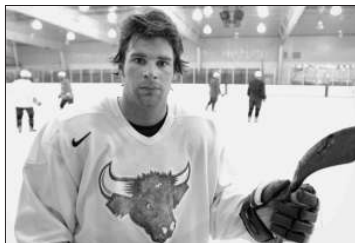
the players denying any such link as a salary cap.

Rumors swirled Thursday night about the content of the league proposal. One report said it included a team-by-team salary cap with no luxury tax. Earlier, sources talked of a compromise deal that would include a luxury tax triggered by a soft salary cap, a salary minimum per team and a hard cap ceiling.

TSN in Canada initially reported a plan that would provide a \$6 million individual salary limit — no player could earn more than \$6 million per season — plus a luxury tax on the team's total payroll, but later said that was not part of the league's proposal.

It was reported that the sides made little progress during Wednesday's 5½-hour meeting in Toronto, but they have picked up their pace considerably in the past week and a half. Thursday's meeting was their fourth in nine days after the sides met only twice during the previous four months.

The sides met for four hours Thursday. As with Wednesday's meeting, the location was not disclosed and Bettman and NHLPA executive director Bob Goodenow did not take part.



AP

**Rob Chappell, a freshman at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, was diagnosed with Type I diabetes when he was 8 years old when doctors discovered his blood-sugar level was four times higher than normal.**

## Diabetic defenseman rarely misses a shift

BY ERIC OLSON

The Associated Press

OMAHA, Neb. — Rob Chappell never thought he'd be able to play college hockey when he found out he had diabetes 12 years ago. Hockey Hall of Famer Bob Clarke convinced him otherwise, and today Chappell is a defenseman for the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

A few days after being diagnosed when he was 8, Chappell wrote to Clarke, who wrote back and told him to keep playing hockey.

"I gave me a boost, seeing he's one of the top 50 NHL players of all time and was able to play with diabetes for 15 years," Chappell said. "I cherish that letter he sent me because it fueled me to get where I am today."

Clarke doesn't remember Chappell's letter. He's received many over the years from diabetics looking for inspiration. Clarke said his advice is always the same: "If I can do it, you can do it."

Clarke overcame diabetes to lead the Philadelphia Flyers to Stanley Cups in 1974 and '75 and win the Hart Trophy three times as the NHL's MVP. Clarke is now the Flyers' general manager.

"I always thought I was a hockey player who had diabetes, not a diabetic hockey player," Clarke said from Philadelphia. "I had to train a little harder maybe, take needles in the morning. But you can make adjustments. The disease is not an excuse to not play hockey."

The gregarious Chappell, a freshman, is eager to spread the same message. Last year, he addressed a group of recently diagnosed diabetic athletes at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, near his hometown of St. Albert. He's told the Omaha hockey staff to give out his phone number to anyone in need of motivation.

Chappell was diagnosed with Type I diabetes when doctors discovered his blood-sugar level was four times higher than normal.

Chappell said Clarke gave him tips on how to keep the disease at bay when playing hockey.

Clarke's management of his diabetes is the stuff of legend.

Other than having serious diabetic seizures on two occasions during training camp as a young pro, Clarke had few, if any, problems.

He would drink a bottle of Coca-Cola with three spoons of dissolved sugar before games, and he would drink a half-glass of orange juice between periods.

The 6-foot, 212-pound Chappell can sense his blood sugar is too low if he starts to feel woozy on his skates. In that case, he leaves the ice to take a swig of sports drink or orange juice — kept on the bench specifically for him.

Chappell, who injects himself with insulin three times a day, carefully prepares before each game. His pregame meal includes lots of pasta, bread and dairy products, and he eats a bagel and drinks juice 45 minutes before the opening faceoff.

Rusty McKune, the Mavericks' athletic trainer, tried to gain more knowledge about diabetes when he found out Chappell would be joining the team this season.

"I was probably more concerned about it than he is," McKune said. "I just watch for how he looks, if he's groggy and if he's able to perform the skills the way he normally does."

"I've ever started to see him lag, I'd go talk to him. But normally by that time, he's coming over to me saying he needs to take a shift off and get a drink."

Only twice this season has Chappell needed a break from practice to take measures to raise his blood sugar. He's never missed a shift in a game because of his condition, and he's been in 20 of the Mavericks' 24 games.

Coach Mike Kemp said he never hesitated to recruit Chappell despite the diabetes.

"We didn't take it as a negative, primarily because in our conversations with his previous coaches, it had never been an issue," Kemp said. "He monitored himself very, very well and as a result it didn't seem to affect him."

Clarke said the treatment of diabetes has come a long way since his playing days and that the disease is much more manageable.

"If you can put the puck in the net, who cares if you've got diabetes?" Clarke said.

## Canada copes without its obsession

BY RACHEL BLOUNT

Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune

TORONTO — Busy as she was with the Hockey Hall of Fame inductee Kelly, she hadn't given much thought to the NHL lockout. Then came November, when she turned on the TV and came face-to-face with the gaping void disrupting her country.

Instead of "Hockey Night in Canada," she found a movie. In ensuing weeks, Masse grappled with the decline in visitors to the Hall of Fame, where she handles public relations; with the job worries of friends who work for teams; and with the stories of lonely restaurants and bars.

While many U.S. citizens aren't even aware of the lockout, the league's shutdown has dragged Canadians through the first four stages of NHL grief: sadness, anger, disgust and apathy.

Given Canadians' devotion to their national game, most expect the fifth to be forgiveness rather than abandonment. Until the labor strife ends, though, the national identity is missing a few lines in its fingerprint.

"On a Saturday night, especially if it's snowing, you just want to watch a hockey game," Masse said. "Even if you're at a bar and you're not really watching it closely, it's just nice to have it there. For Canadians, this is a real struggle."

### Losses and cutbacks

The NHL hasn't yet considered replacement players, but the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation already has its new lineup. Indi-

ana Jones and Luke Skywalker are among those standing in for Mats Sundin and Jarome Iginla, and they're proving surprisingly popular this far.

CBC has replaced its "Hockey Night in Canada" telecasts — a beloved Saturday institution for 52 years — with movies. The one constant is "Hockey Night" host Ron MacLean, who is introducing the films to an average of 900,000 viewers. NHL games draw an average of 1.2 million.

There are darker numbers, however, about 50 people who work exclusively on "Hockey Night" have been laid off, and CBC President Robert Rabinovitch has predicted the network will lose \$1 million Canadian if the season is canceled.

All-sports network TSN is showing reruns of "classic" NHL games.

The weekly magazine "The Hockey News" is publishing every other week. Puck manufacturer InGlasco, which supplies the NHL, has laid off 20 of its 40 workers.

Based on government statistics, Toronto's Globe and Mail newspaper estimated a lost season could deliver a \$170 million hit to Canada's gross domestic product.

### Costly times

First came the SARS outbreak. Then, a Toronto smoking ban. Brian Woodcock said the Loose Moose sports bar and grill weathered those hardships, and it can get through the NHL lockout, too.

Woodcock, the general manager, said the decline in his business

hasn't been steep enough to warrant layoffs. He has heard stories of greater suffering from other bars and restaurants near Air Canada Centre, home of the Toronto Maple Leafs. Away from work, though, Woodcock is among millions of Canadians finding other things to do.

"I don't miss it as much as I thought I would," said Woodcock, a Leafs fan and recreational player. "I'm not focused on when the Leafs game is, and I'm doing things with my family, like going to the theater."

Canada's junior team gave some businesses a brief respite by winning the World Junior Championships earlier this month. But Woodcock said for many people, nothing quite measures up to the NHL.

"In the U.S., the NHL is on a par with what, five-pin bowling?" Woodcock said. "Here, even if we're not happy with things, we'll go back and just have a dihard need to see the Leafs."

### Growing apathy

At Wayne Gretzky's restaurant, where the coffee stirrers are shaped like hockey sticks, a sign behind the bar teases, "Game On." Cherry bleats on one TV screen, pitching a cold remedy. On another, a sports news program shows the results of a viewer poll asking whether the NHL season is salvaged.

The responses: No, 49. Yes, 25. I couldn't care less, 26.

This comes on the heels of a Toronto Globe and Mail poll asking readers if they cared whether the season ended. Of more than 20,000 responses, 87 percent said they didn't.

# Delgado finalizes deal;arkinleavingtowardretiring

BY RONALD BLUM  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Carlos Delgado is taking his anti-war protest to Florida.

While Delgado finalized his \$52 million, four-year deal with the Marlins on Thursday, Magglio Ordonez made a counteroffer to the Detroit Tigers and Barry Larkin said he is leaning toward retirement.

Delgado, who accepted Florida's offer on Tuesday, said during his introductory news conference that he will continue not to stand during the playing of "God Bless America."

He refused to stand when "God Bless America" was played last season. Instead, he would stay on the Toronto Blue Jays bench or go into the dugout tunnel.

"I wouldn't call it politics, because I hate politics," Delgado said. "The reason why I didn't stand for 'God Bless America' was because I didn't like the way that 'God Bless America' and 9-11 to the war in Iraq in baseball."

Marlins officials, who gave Del-

## Baseball roundup

gado the richest per-season contract in the team's 12-year history, made no objection to his war protest.

"The Marlins don't support it, and we don't not support it," team president David Samson said. "He's an adult. The club's position is that what he does is up to him."

Ordonez, the last remaining free agent, told agent Scott Boras to make the counterproposal to Detroit. The outfielder met Monday with Tigers owner Mike Ilich, team president Dave Dombrowski and manager Alan Trammell.

"Mike Ilich indicated he was interested in making a move that would dramatically affect the franchise," Boras said. Ordonez made \$14 million last year with the Chicago White Sox and had been seeking a five-year deal before he became a free agent.

"Mike did a really good job in

his meeting of expressing where the Tigers can be," Boras said. "He thought the Tigers have a very good chance of winning the AL Central. Magglio is very familiar

## Larkin

with the AL Central and with Detroit."

Ordonez hit .292 last year with nine homers and 37 RBIs, missing most of the season with a knee injury that required two operations.

"They talked to the doctors and were very comfortable Magglio is healthy," Boras said. Larkin said he has turned down offers to start for several other teams because he can't envision himself playing anywhere but Cincinnati.

"I thought eventually I'd be able to say, 'yeah, I can do this,' the 40-year-old shortstop said. "But I'm big on loyalty. I couldn't

come to grips with making a 100 percent commitment" to another team.

Several teams are still interested in the former All-Star as a reserve, giving him a chance to help develop young players.

Larkin sounds as if he's going to retire, and says he's "pretty close" to a final decision.

"I simply haven't made an announcement that I'm not going to play or retire because it's not that pressing of an issue," he said. "If it comes to the point that spring training starts and I'm not playing, then it will be obvious. I want no big fanfare, no major announcement."

Also Thursday, pitcher Hideo Nomo agreed to a minor league contract with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays that would pay him \$800,000 if he is added to the big league roster, and Japanese infielder Tadahito Iguchi finalized his \$4.95 million, two-year deal with the White Sox.

Infielder George Arias, a former star in the Japanese league, agreed to a minor league contract with the Washington Nationals; reliever Rick White

agreed to a minor league contract with Pittsburgh (\$475,000 if added to the roster); and reliever Jay Powell reached a preliminary agreement on a minor league deal with the Atlanta Braves.

The New York Yankees reached preliminary agreements on minor league contracts with utilityman Damian Rous (\$600,000) and outfielder Doug Glavine (\$550,000).

Houston outfielder Lance Berkman was among five players in salary arbitration who settled, agreeing to a \$10.5 million, one-year contract. Houston will continue to work for a multiyear deal with the All-Star, who is expected to miss the start of the season after injuring his knee playing flag football.

Arizona right-hander Mike Kopeck got a \$2 million, two-year deal. Anaheim backup catcher Clark agreed to a \$1.15 million, one-year contract and Atlanta right-hander Kevin Grysinski accepted a \$877,500, one-year contract. St. Louis backup catcher Josh Paul settled at \$450,000, leaving 26 players still scheduled for hearings next month.

# Revolution scoring leader Moore announces retirement

The Associated Press

## Sports briefs

FOXBORO, Mass. — Joe-Max Moore announced his retirement from soccer Thursday, ending a career in which he played in three World Cups and became the New England Revolution's career scoring leader.

Moore, 33, hurt his right knee late in 2002 and aggravated the injury last April in a game against the MetroStars. He had reconstructive ligament surgery last Friday.

"After numerous attempts to strengthen and stabilize my knee through rehab, it became clear that I had no alternative but to have reconstructive surgery," he said in a statement.

"Considering my age and the recovery time necessary, I have decided to end my player career." Moore was a two-time All-America at UCLA. He scored 24 goals in international competition for the U.S. national team, ranking him third in that category, and played in the 1994, 1998 and 2002 World Cup finals. He also played for the U.S. in the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

His penalty kick against Jamaica on Sept. 7, 2001, at Foxboro Stadium won the game and clinched a berth for the U.S. in the 2002 World Cup.

He joined the Revolution mid-season through Major League Soccer's inaugural season in 1996 and spent parts of six seasons with New England. His 117 points (41 goals, 35 assists) tops the team's career list.

From 1999-2001, he played for Everton of the English Premier League. Moore also played professionally in Germany and Ecuador.

**Ex-Baylor player Dotson deemed ready for murder trial**  
WACO, Texas — A former Bay-

lor basketball player accused of killing a teammate has regained his competence to stand trial and is ready to be returned from a state hospital, a psychologist says. Carolyn Dotson, 22, had been taken to North Texas State Hospital in Vernon after a defense psychologist, state psychiatrist and court-appointed independent psychiatrist all found that Dotson was incompetent to stand trial in the death of Patrick Denney.

Denney's body was found in a field near Baylor's Waco campus in July 2003. He had been missing for about six weeks.

In a report to District Judge George Allen, hospital psychologist Thomas Gray said Dotson is ready to be returned to the McLennan County Jail. Gray said Dotson must continue to receive psychiatric care, take prescribed medication, meet with a counselor and not use alcohol and illegal drugs, the Waco Tribune-Herald reported in its Friday edition.

**Trinidad will meet 154-pound champion Wright on May 14**

LAS VEGAS — Former three-time world champion Felix Trinidad will fight for the second time since coming out of retirement when he meets reigning 154-pound champion Winky Wright on May 14.

The fight, announced Thursday by promoter Don King, will be a 160-pound bout with no titles at stake.

Trinidad came off a layoff of more than two years to knock out Ricardo Mayorga in the eighth round last October in a middleweight bout. A former champion at 147, 154 and 160 pounds, he is 41-1 with 34 knockouts, losing

only to middleweight champion Bernard Hopkins.

Wright (48-3, 25 knockouts) is coming off of consecutive victories over Shane Mosley.

The fight will be held at the MGM Grand Hotel and will be televised on HBO pay-per-view.

## Quit-smoking product enters NASCAR

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — One year after kicking its decades-long cigarette sponsorship habit, NASCAR apparently needs a little help staying smoke-free. Nicorette gum became the first smoking cessation product to enter NASCAR when GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare signed a sponsorship deal Thursday with Chip Ganassi Racing.

Three of its quit-smoking products — the gum, the Nicoderm CQ patch and Commit lozenges — will be advertised on the rear decklid of Casey Mears' team during the season. Nicorette will also be the primary sponsor on the No. 41 Dodge for one race in a deal estimated to cost the company \$3 million annually.

The anti-smoking products enter the sport one year after R.J. Reynolds' Winston brand ended a 33-year run as title sponsor of NASCAR's top race series. With wireless company Nextel replacing Winston, NASCAR has made an effort to distance itself from its tobacco-smeared, cigarette-smoking image.

**Judge rules NCAA tapes will be allowed at Neuseil trial**

KENT, Wash. — A judge rejected an effort Thursday by Rick Neuseil's lawyers to disallow tape recordings made by NCAA investigators as evidence in the coach's lawsuit against the university of Washington and the NCAA.

The tapes came from Neu-

seil's interview with NCAA investigators on June 4, 2003, in Seattle. Early on the tapes, Neuseil is heard denying that he gambled on NCAA basketball games.

Later, after consulting with a lawyer, Neuseil admitted doing so. He was fired later that month as Washington's football coach, with university officials saying he was "really honest when first questioned."

Opening statements are scheduled for Monday.

Neuseil maintains the university wrongfully terminated his contract, and that high-ranking NCAA officials improperly influenced his employment and his job prospects by encouraging Washington administrators to fire him.

The NFL's Baltimore Ravens hired Neuseil last week as quarterback coach.

## Referee admits to fixing soccer matches in Germany

FRANKFURT, Germany — A year before Germany hosts the World Cup, a referee's admission that he fixed games has caused a tremor in the soccer world.

Referee Robert Hoyzer said Thursday that he's ready to cooperate with prosecutors.

"The accusations made against me in the public are true," Hoyzer said in a statement issued by his lawyer. "I regret my behavior profoundly and I excuse myself to the German soccer federation, my referee colleagues and all soccer fans."

The German soccer federation (DFB) accused Hoyzer of manipulating the outcomes of at least five games in Germany's lower divisions and the German Cup after betting on the results. He initially denied the charges.

Changes already have been made. The federation said it

would announce referee assignments two weeks before the start of 10. It also will expand its system of monitoring games and referee performances.

Because of legal issues, there was no immediate ban on betting by referees. But the 44 referees who attended the DFB's emergency meeting said they had never placed bets and would not do so in the future.

## Guard Randle likely to miss rest of Illinois' season

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Illinois guard Brian Randle said Thursday he likely will sit out the rest of the season after recovering from a broken left hand.

"I think it's the best thing for me the way things are going right now," said Randle, who broke his hand when he punched a wall in frustration during pre-season practice. "Conditioning, how late it is in the year, I think right now reshaping probably is the best decision."

He does not play for the rest of the season for the top-ranked Illini, the sophomore can ask the NCAA for a medical exemption to preserve his three remaining years of eligibility.

## Germany applies to hold swimming worlds

FRANKFURT, Germany — Germany has applied to have Berlin stage this year's swimming world championships, which were pulled away from Montreal because of local organizers' failure to raise enough money.

Berlin proposed to host the event July 17-31, the same dates as for the 2004 Olympics.

Another possible site is Athens, which pulled the championship from Montreal on Jan. 10, after Canadian organizers said they were \$5 million short of meeting their \$30 million budget.

## Boston police planning tight security on Super Sunday

The Associated Press

BOSTON — Police promised to be out in force on Super Bowl Sunday, hoping to discourage the mob behavior that has been an unfortunate byproduct of local sports teams' recent success and resulted in the deaths of two young people.

Police officials declined Thursday to detail their Super Bowl security strategy because all the details have yet to be worked out, but a high-ranking officer told The Boston Globe he believes the plan for Feb. 6 will be similar to that during the World Series between the Red Sox and the St. Louis Cardinals.

When the Red Sox clinched the world championship, more than 700 officers were in the streets around Fenway Park, using canisters of pepper spray and water hoses to control the crowds. Only a few minor injuries were reported.

Police Commissioner Kathleen M. O'Toole has issued a directive forbidding most officers from taking Super Bowl Sunday off.

Last year, only 43 officers were assigned to control celebrating crowds when the New England Patriots beat the Carolina Panthers for the NFL championship.

During the rioting, James Grabowski, a 21-year-old college student, died after he was run down by an alleged drunken driver near Northeastern University.

An internal report later said the police departments' lack of preparation was "inevitable."

During rioting that followed the Red Sox's American League pennant victory in October, Victoria Sneeky, a 21-year-old Emerson College student, died after she was struck in the eye by a police pepper pellet gun.

The police official told the Globe he believes those weapons will not be deployed for the Super Bowl.

Besides police preparations for Super Bowl Sunday, Mayor Thomas M. Menino has scheduled meetings Monday with student leaders from area colleges and universities to discuss how students can help create a safe environment.

Northeastern University's entire police force, which numbers about 50, has been ordered to work on Super Bowl Sunday.

Northeastern officials also will meet daily next week to plan crowd-control measures.

■ On game day, Northeastern and Boston University will host alcohol-free game-night parties.

Northeastern spokesman Fred McGrail said that in addition to arrests by police, the university will expel or suspend students who misbehave.

David Durkin, president of the Student Government Association at Northeastern, said he is convinced that this year's events will give students from pouring into the streets.

"The huge prizes (a plasma screen television, other electronic products) and the scale of the event will draw in Durkin said. "It's more than just putting the game on the big screen."

## Eagles' Burgess feeling productive again

### Philadelphia DE overcomes injuries, compliments Kearsse on line

By DAN GELSTON

The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Forget Terrell Owens, Jevon Kearse and Brian Westbrook. Maybe the player of the Philadelphia Eagles really needed to snap their three-year NFC championship game losing streak was Derrick Burgess.

After all, it was Burgess who harassed Atlanta's Michael Vick mercilessly and helped limit the NFL's top-ranked rushing offense to 99 yards. It was Burgess who had two sacks, six tackles and shut down running lanes that made Vick miserable.

Now he wants a similar performance against Tom Brady and the Patriots in the Super Bowl on Feb. 6.

"It feels good for the moment, but that was last week," Burgess said Thursday. "It's done now. Now, I've got to get out here this week and do it all over again."

Burgess can hardly be blamed for wanting the season to last as long as it possibly can. The fourth-year pro missed all but one game the past two years because of injuries. But his two-sack performance against the Falcons put everyone on notice that he's all the way back.

"To go through so much and be where I am right now with my teammates, it's just a beautiful thing," Burgess said.

Burgess missed the last 15 games of the 2002 season with a broken foot. Then last year, only four games later, he tore his Achilles' tendon and was out for the entire season.

One season-ending injury must have determined Burgess stronger than ever. The next one made him wonder why the injuries kept happening.

Last summer it was hard for Burgess not to dwell on the nearly two full seasons he missed and wonder whether it could happen again. "I don't want to say I had doubts, but I'll say concerns," he said. "But once you step on the field, it's all out the window. At



Philadelphia Eagles DE Derrick Burgess (56) harassed Atlanta Falcons QB Michael Vick (7) all day in the NFC championship game.

ries kept happening. Last summer it was hard for Burgess not to dwell on the nearly two full seasons he missed and wonder whether it could happen again. "I don't want to say I had doubts, but I'll say concerns," he said. "But once you step on the field, it's all out the window. At

minicamp, it was over with. Whatever was going to happen was going to happen."

Burgess wasn't totally immune this season, either. He was off to a solid start with 2½ sacks and started 11 of 12 games until he separated his sternum against Green Bay on Dec. 5, causing him to miss the

last four games of the regular season.

Still, defensive coordinator Jim Johnson thought Burgess could play better in the postseason.

"It's amazing that he did it through this whole year," Johnson said. "He hasn't been a pleasant surprise because we always knew he was a good football player."

Burgess returned to start Philadelphia's first playoff game against Minnesota and did nothing in that. No sacks, no tackles, no impact.

Maybe that's why Vick had no idea what No. 56 was chasing him all over the field. All Vick knew was that Kearse was on one end and "another good defensive lineman" on the other end created problems.

Burgess benefited from a tip that Eagles defensive line coach Tommy Brasher gave him. Brasher suggested that Kearse and Burgess swap sides. That put Burgess back on his more natural left side and the speedier Kearse on the right, allowing him to better fill the spot where the left-handed Vick was more likely to run.

When Vick tried to run from Kearse, he ran right into Burgess. Brady presents a different problem then the more mobile Vick and Minnesota's Daunte Culpepper. Brady stays in the pocket longer and won't beat a team with his feet like Vick.

"One is an athlete and one's a quarterback," Burgess said. "You can't shoot and flop the duo again or just keep Burgess on the right side. Either way is fine with Burgess."

Kearse has to go down there and get 'W,' I'll do whatever it takes," Burgess said.

## Ex-Syracuse coach Pasqualoni joins Cowboys staff

The Associated Press

IRVING, Texas — Former Syracuse head coach Paul Pasqualoni became the first new addition to Bill Parcells' coaching staff Thursday.

Pasqualoni, 55, has yet to be assigned a specific role. The only current vacancy on Parcells' staff is at tight end, following last week's release of offensive line coach George Warhop and kicking coach Steve Hoffman.

The team's former tight ends coach, Tony Sparano, was moved to replace Warhop.

Pasqualoni was fired after a 6-5 campaign last season. He was 107-59-1 in 14 seasons at Syracuse and led the Orange to nine bowl games.

### Niners hire Saints' McCarthy as offensive coordinator

SAN FRANCISCO — Mike McCarthy will return the West Coast offense to the San Francisco 49ers after joining the club as coach Mike Nolan's offensive coordinator on Thursday.

The 49ers also hired George Warhop as their offensive line coach, adding two more veteran



NFL assistants to Nolan's new staff.

McCarthy spent the past five seasons with the New Orleans Saints, whose offense led the NFL in scoring in 2002. McCarthy also coached the quarterbacks at Green Bay and Kansas City working with Brett Favre and Joe Montana — before joining the Saints.

Nolan pledged to bring the West Coast offense back to San Francisco when he was hired earlier this month.

Warhop spent the previous two seasons coaching the Dallas Cowboys' offensive line following five years with the Arizona Cardinals.

### Raiders hire Colletto to coach offensive line

ALAMEDA, Calif. — Former Purdue head coach Jim Colletto was hired Thursday as offensive line coach for the Oakland Raiders.

Colletto was the head coach at Purdue from 1991-96, then spent

two seasons as Notre Dame's offensive coordinator before joining the Baltimore Ravens, where he spent the past six years. His offensive line helped Baltimore win a Super Bowl while blocking for Jamal Lewis.

But coach Brian Billick fired Colletto on Jan. 10, a week after offensive coordinator Matt Canavan resigned under pressure. The Ravens finished 31st in the NFL in total offense this season.

Colletto replaces Aaron Kromer, who left the Raiders earlier in the month to join the staff of former boss Jon Gruden in Tampa Bay.

### Attorney: Ravens CB unfairly targeted by gambling probe

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — Baltimore Ravens cornerback Corey Fuller was unfairly targeted by a gambling probe because of his celebrity, his attorney told a jury Thursday.

The 10-year NFL veteran was arrested in April when police broke up a high-stakes card game at his Tallahassee home. Fuller was charged with maintaining a gambling house, use of a firearm

in commission of a felony and misdemeanor gambling.

"The evidence is going to show the reason we're here is not what Mr. Fuller did, but who Mr. Fuller is," defense attorney Tim Jansen said in his opening statement. "Their investigation was detailed to target Mr. Fuller."

But prosecutor Matt Smith said the former Florida State star had a weapon on him while a card game was being played and received part of the pot for hosting the game.

"He was standing around the table like a pit boss," he said his cut," Smith said in his opening statement.

Jansen noted that Fuller obtained a concealed weapons permit in 2001, shortly after his arrest Jan. 21, 2004, an event that triggered the investigation among several legal agencies.

The defense also said a confidential informant used by Jacksonville police at some of the games had seven felony convictions and was paid by authorities to get information on what was going on inside Fuller's home.

If convicted, Fuller could face a maximum five-year sentence and \$5,000 fine.

## SPORTS



After two seasons of injuries, Eagles' Burgess seeing results, Page 31

## Rockets lifting off



ORLANDO SENTINEL/KCTV

The Houston Rockets started slowly despite picking up NBA scoring champ Tracy McGrady in the offseason. They are now five games over .500.

## McGrady and teammates show some muscle, living up to preseason hype

BY JOEL ANDERSON  
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — David Wesley was grateful to leave the NBA's worst team for one considered a playoff contender when he was traded from New Orleans to Houston.

But to his astonishment, Wesley discovered that the trade last month simply moved him from one sub-.500 team for another.

"The first night I got here, my first question was, 'How are you guys losing?'" Wesley recalled asking his new Rockets teammates. "Man, I was surprised."

Despite an offseason trade for reigning NBA scoring champ Tracy McGrady that paired him with All-Star center Yao Ming, Houston got off to a 12-14 start and hardly resembled a team thought to be a preseason title favorite.

Look at those reeling Rockets now.

Since Wesley joined the team Dec. 27, the Rockets have won 11 of 15 games and worked themselves back into the crowded Western

Conference postseason picture. Heading into Friday night's game against Sacramento, Houston has matched a season high with four straight wins and moved five games over .500 (24-19) for the first time this season.

"It's just come together for us," point guard Bob Sura said. "We're playing the way we expected to play."

Of course, the addition of Wesley, a 6-foot-1 guard averaging 12 points in his 12th NBA season, has been only part of the recent resurgence of the Rockets.

McGrady has comfortably settled into a role as the team's top scorer without hogging the ball. Yao has emerged from an early season slump. Sura has finally recovered from off-season back surgery to become the team's steady floor leader.

And the trades for Wesley and guard Jon Barry from Atlanta — players from two of the league's worst teams — in late December have given the Rockets a much-needed boost of intensity, toughness and veteran moxie.

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AP

Since acquiring guard David Wesley from New Orleans on Dec. 27, the Rockets have won 11 of their last 15 games and improved to 24-19.



Hewitt ousts Roddick for spot in Australian final

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Georgia Tech stuns No. 5 Wake for much-needed win

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Delgado finalizes \$52M, four-year deal with Mets

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Players reportedly reject latest NHL salary cap proposal Page 29